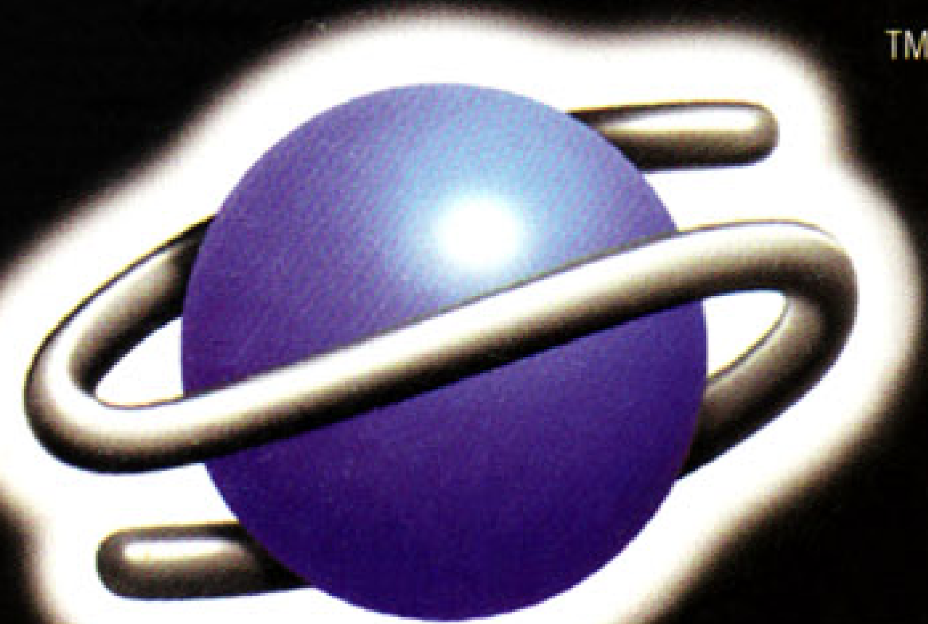
THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE





SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

No.1 FOR SATURN

ISSUE 21 £2.75
JULY 1997



20 PAGES OF UNBEATABLE TIPS

WIPEOUT 2097

PSYGNOSIS' ULTIMATE RACER HITS SATURN!

SONIC JAM

THE ULTIMATE RETRO PACK!

RESIDENT EVIL

WE'VE GOT IT FIRST!

MARVEL SUPER HEROES

X-MEN SEQUEL PUSHES SATURN TO THE LIMITS!

PLUS! JONAH LOMU RUGBY ID4 BATTLESTATIONS FIGHTING FORCE LAST BRONX: AM3 INTERVIEW WARCRAFT 2 HOUSE OF THE DEAD DARKLIGHT THE CROW

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX



GAME COMPETITION



I AM INVINCIBLE!

Prove your fighting prowess in the SEGA/ GAME FIGHTERS MEGAMIX Challenge

Okay kids, It's time to put your money where your mouth is, and put those boasts to the test, as we announce the launch of the nationwide FIGHTERS MEGAMIX tournament!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has teamed up with SEGA and the GAME chain of retailers, in a legendary search to find the best Fighters Megamix player in the whole country. We're not talking about players that are 'quite good' or even people that are 'rather tasty', we're looking for the BEST. The competition will be tough - competitors will be allowed one play of Megamix on default settings to post a completion time on course A, and the eight fastest times posted in participating Game stores across the country will be invited (travel expenses paid) to compete in the Grand Final!

The competition is open to anybody - from namby-pamby Megamix virgins to Virtua Fighter veterans - but be warned, you'll need to be a seasoned Megamix player if you really want to make the cut. Remember, only the best eight times posted in Game shops across the whole country will qualify for the final, so some serious training is called for!

Now then, pay attention, this is the rules section. The competition will run in all participating Game shops from Wednesday June 11th until Sunday June 22nd (ring Game on 0181 974 1555 for a list of participating stores), with the final being held on July 5th. If you want to practise in advance at home (you will) the game MUST be played on the default settings, and we're looking for the quickest completion of course A. But of course, to be a true champion, players must do the time in a Game shop under the intense pressure of competition - so don't bother telling us about how fast you did it at home. We don't care.

So... you know what is required of you, young warriors, it is now time for you to step forward and prove your worth in the combat arena. Fight!

YEAH, BUT WHAT DO I GET?

As if fame and public adoration wasn't enough of a prize, Sega are also giving away some great rewards to those lucky few who make the grade. Just for getting to the last eight, all warriors will receive a subscription to SSM (and the free day out, remember!), while the two losing semi-finalists bag themselves a Saturn arcade joystick. The overall runner-up will be awarded a huge Japanese two-player Saturn joystick, and for the champion, the victor, the triumphant being who can claim to be the best Megamix player in the UK? How about an exclusive, one-of-a-kind jacket, as worn by Jacky Bryant in the game, with the Fighters Megamix artwork airbrushed onto the back! A true reward for a true champion. Get playing!





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COMING SOON



BIG IN JAPAN

FEATURES



SHOWCASES



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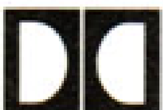
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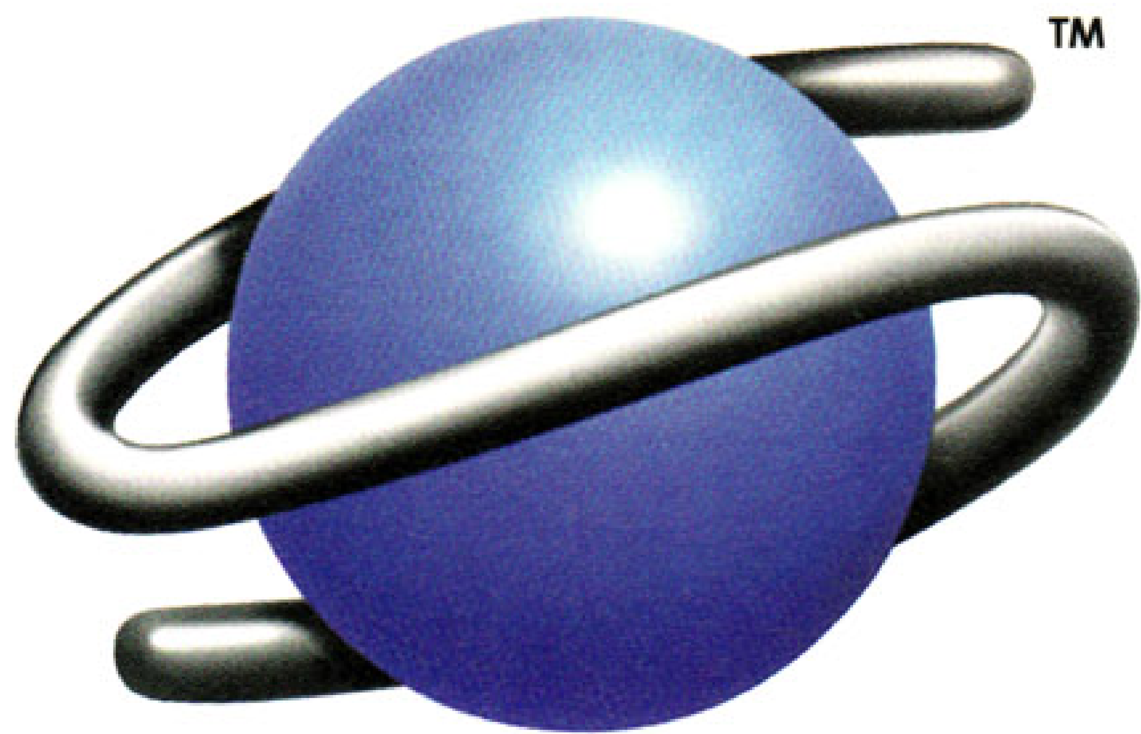


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NEWS

As can be witnessed by the stunning line-up of games we have in this issue, the quality of Saturn software is at its highest yet with a vast range of ace titles reaching the end of their development cycles. But Sega need to do more to boost the Saturn's image. We need a £99 pricepoint for a standalone machine. And then we need a full-on ad campaign in the national and games press to tell everyone of the stunning games you can get EXCLUSIVELY for the Saturn, along with the hot licensed titles that are SUPERIOR on the Sega machine. Whether we like it or not, it's a fact that the Saturn's reputation isn't as strong as the PlayStation's in the mass market. There's still a chance for the Saturn to boost its installed base to huge levels and the machine has every chance of doing so judging by the games I've seen in development during the last couple of months. But it's going to need a big push from the Saturn's marketeers... And we really need to see it now.
Rich Leadbetter,
Editor.



SUMMER LINE-UP TAKES SHAPE!

AWESOME SATURN TITLES TO LOOK FORWARD TO

Continuing the Saturn's dominance of quality gaming, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can reveal final UK plans for the shipment of some incredible games over the next few months... with the promise of even more brilliant titles coming soon after.





SkyTarget (top) and Sonic Jam (above) are two of Sega's big hopes for the Summer months. Overall, their line-up of Saturn titles is absolutely amazing!

ARCADE ACTION KICKS OFF THE ASSAULT

Sega's ace summer line-up of games has already begun with the release of the AM2 wondergame, Fighters MegaMix. AM2 have done it again with the BIGGEST 3D fighting game in the whole history of the world ever, a marvellous treat with stunning gameplay, it received a deserving 95% in the last issue and is Game of the Month over in Out Now (see page 96).

Continuing the arcade action we have the translation of SkyTarget which has moved up to a June 5 release. Now the vast majority of the Sega arcade conversions are frankly superb, but SkyTarget isn't so cool. Still, for a more detailed analysis, check out the next issue of SSM.

Rounding off the arcade conversions, King of Fighters 95 finally arrives in August. As 2D fighting games go, SNK's brawler is revered with the best amongst die-hard arcadesters and received a high 89% in our reviews section.

PLAYSTATION CONVERSIONS ARE GO!

The excellent news is that we can confirm a release date for the potentially amazing Resident Evil. You can read all about the Saturn version of this game on page 20, but basically Capcom have confirmed that the backgrounds will be superior to the PlayStation original AND there is the potential for more enhancements to the gameplay in the form of the "BioHazard Dash" special edition additions that Capcom are promising to add to the Saturn translation. Just as this issue went to press, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE learned that the conversion has been signed up exclusively by Sega themselves, inching out the more traditional UK publisher of Capcom produce, Virgin Interactive. All those who've seen it reckon that the Saturn version of Resident Evil is bloody excellent and apparently the enhancements made over the original are very cool indeed - and no we aren't going to tell you what they are. Suffice to say that next month we'll reveal all - and we guarantee that you will be surprised.

Staying with the PlayStation conversions, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can now reveal that Sega have indeed scooped up the rights to WipEout 2097, as featured on page 12 of this fine issue. Whilst there are some small deficiencies when compared with the PlayStation original, there's no denying that the speed, fluidity and full-on gameplay of the Sony game have made it across fully intact on the Saturn translation. This could well make it one of the premiere road race games for the Sega machine. Expect this ace game to make an appearance in July.

SONIC JAM DETAILS CONFIRMED!

The star of this month's mammoth showcase, Sonic the Hedgehog, is fully confirmed for a UK outing in the form of the super retro pack Sonic Jam. There has been some discussion on the Internet with regards to a possible delay on the European release until AFTER the launch of the new 3D Sonic game this winter.

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can quash all rumours. Sonic Jam IS heading for shops with a tentative release date of August 28. Best of all is the price: this lovely Saturn game will retail for £34.99.


Shining the Holy Ark is one of the best RPGs ever - you must own this ace adventure!

THE GREATEST ROLE-PLAYING GAMES!

One of the most celebrated strategy role-playing games ever is Dragon Force, as featured in the Introducing section of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in issue #20. A huge, deeply involving storyline coupled with super-deep gameplay make this another essential Saturn title. Expect this game in August or September. Kicking off the summer onslaught we have our editor's current Fave Game: Shining the Holy Ark! Tons of ace graphics, a great storyline, some brilliant characters, amazing magic spells and lashes of fighting make this a RPG that MUST be bought. It's out on June 19.


Shining the Holy Ark received 93% in SSM!


Saturn Resident Evil has been signed by Sega and will appear in September... DEFINITELY!





NEXT MONTH... E3 IS HERE!

Sega are threatening to OWN the forthcoming Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) with a line-up of games that's frankly very strong indeed. Also, if there is likely to be a price drop on the Saturn (and many people in the know are indicating strongly that this will be the case) it's E3 where the announcements will take place.

So what titles will steal the show? Basically, the entire Saturn line-up for the last quarter of this year! Making their debut in the west we'll see Panzer Dragoon Saga: Team Andromeda's entrance into the world of the RPG, Sega Touring Car Championship (conversion of the super-cool AM Annex arcade machine), Last Bronx (AM3's technically astounding arcade conversion) but best of all, we'll be getting the first look at Sonic Team's new Saturn game, Phase Two of Project Sonic! SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can reveal that this is going to be a Sonic game with a racing theme to it, not a 3D platform game as such. The FULL story will appear in the next issue.

And if those titles aren't enough, Marvel Super Heroes and Resident Evil will be shown... and guaranteed to astound the E3 delegates will be Lobotomy Software's excellent work on the Saturn versions of two PC classics: Duke Nukem 3D and Quake. Both titles are shaping up to be of epoch-making quality and both are looking like being the only console conversions of the two games that we'll see at the show!

TOMB RAIDER 2 JEOPARDY!

Shocking news reaches SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE regarding the status of the Saturn rendition of Tomb Raider 2, Core Design's eagerly anticipated title which was due to be released in October along with PC and PlayStation versions.

Notice the emphasis on "was" because the latest news to emerge is that the game will ONLY appear on the PC and the PlayStation. Numerous reasons are cropping up as to the reason behind the game's non-appearance on the Sega Saturn. First of all there is talk of Sony signing an exclusivity deal on the game, locking out all other console conversions. This hasn't been confirmed by Core or Sony at the time of writing.

The second, perhaps more sinister, reason concerns the Saturn's suitability for the game. The original game ran at a slower frame rate than the PlayStation version and Core are pushing that game's engine to the limit for the new sequel. In the original, around 150 polygons were used on-screen to show off the backgrounds - this is thought to be far higher on Tomb Raider 2, which is set in Venice. This would explain the rumours regarding Core looking into using the forthcoming 3D enhancement cartridge widely tipped to be packaged with Saturn Virtua Fighter 3. Considering the lack of details to emerge on the upgrade (and whether there will actually be one at all - AM2 have yet to announce anything on VF3 which looks set to slip to 1998) perhaps this isn't so surprising. Whatever the reason, the sad fact is that at the time of writing, Tomb Raider 2 is not in development for the Sega Saturn.

Regardless of TR2's fate, Core have confirmed that their two other major products: Fighting Force (see page 16) and the potentially amazing Ninja (report soon) will DEFINITELY be coming for the Saturn. So the company are by no means leaving the Saturn market behind.




Apparently this can't be done on Saturn.

HMV CHARTS

Week ending May 24th



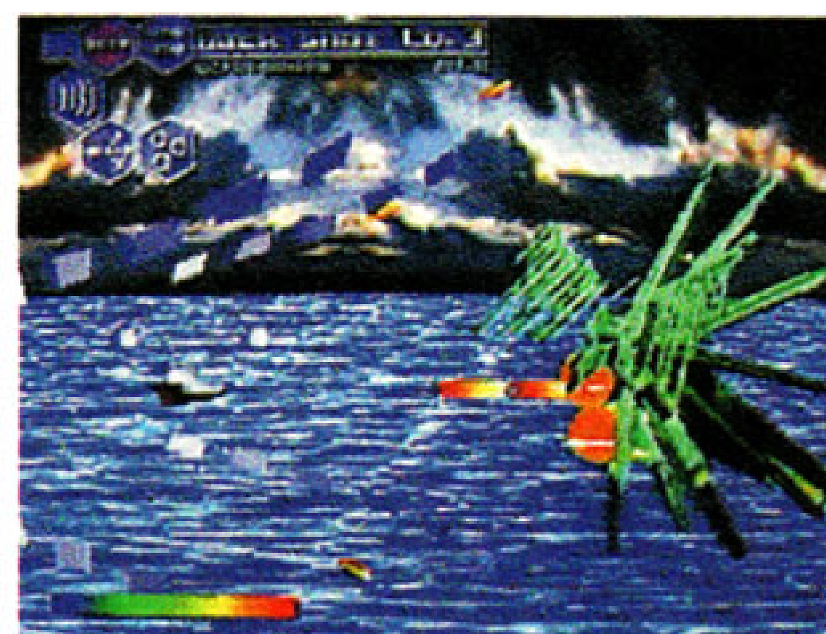
READERS CHARTS

Send us your top ten games and you could be mentioned in this small but significant space next month. You also get a game! Send your charts to READER CHARTS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 MILLHARBOUR, THE ISLE OF DOGS, LONDON, E14 9TZ. This month's reader chart comes from P Swiatek of Berkshire...

	HMV CHARTS		READERS CHARTS		SATURN MAGAZINE CHARTS
1	Fighters MegaMix	1	Manx TT	1	Fighters MegaMix
2	Command and Conquer	2	Die Hard Trilogy	2	Virtua Fighter 3 (coin-op)
3	Manx TT	3	NiGHTS	3	House of the Dead (coin-op)
4	FIFA '97	4	Sega Rally Championship	4	WipEout 2097
5	Soviet Strike	5	Virtua Fighter 2	5	Sonic Jam
6	Saturn Bomberman	6	Virtua Cop 2	6	Resident Evil
7	Virtua Cop 2	7	Tomb Raider	7	Exhumed
8	Die Hard Arcade	8	WorldWide Soccer '97	8	Metal Slug
9	Tomb Raider	9	Sega Ages	9	Street Fighter Alpha 2
10	Dark Savior	10	Exhumed	10	Sega Rally Championship

ENTER... THUNDERFORCE V!

The magic's back as the original ThunderForce programmers, Technosoft, take the franchise to the next level as ThunderForce hits the Saturn! As far as we can tell, the basic side-scrolling shoot 'em up formula remains very similar indeed to what we've seen on the Megadrive versions of the game. However, the difference is that the enemy sprites you face off against are full 3D polygon constructions, allowing for some spectacular effects as they zoom onto the screen or get blown up - whatever. The ThunderForce games are known for their hugely taxing difficulty level and it's thought that once again this will come to the forefront in the new game. The inside word is that Technosoft were very impressed with Taito's Raystorm game on the PlayStation (which is also set to hit the Saturn, incidently), but reckoned that they could do even better with Saturn ThunderForce. Well, the game is set for a July release, so expect to see something more concrete in this fine magazine in the next couple of issues.








In these pictures of the new ThunderForce V (apologies for the quality - they're the only ones we could get), you see one of the 3D monsters flying onto the screen with the ship doing battle with it! With Technosoft putting their all behind this product, ThunderForce V should be a spectacular experience! The game is due in Japan in July and if it's as good as we think it's going to be, this is bound to end up with a UK release.

Pandemonium!™

WOOLWORTHS

£5 OFF

This voucher entitles the user to £5 off the retail value of Pandemonium on the Sega saturn.
It cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotion.
It is valid from June 14, 1997 to July 14, 1997 inclusive.

WF 0209

PANDEMONIUM APOLOGIES

As readers of the last issue will know, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in association with Sega and Woolworths offered you lot the opportunity to get five quid off the retail price of the rather excellent Saturn rendition of Pandemonium. However, by the time the game reached the shelves, the coupon was out of date! The release was put back because of a bug, so here's another coupon!




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NOW EVEN BIGGER

TWIX

SEGA BUY INTO 3DFX!



ULTIMATE 3D TECHNOLOGY FOR THE NEXT SEGA MACHINE!

It was recently announced that Sega Enterprises have bought a vast amount of stock in the hardware developer 3DFX, responsible for the cutting edge 3D technology boards for the PC.

3DFX's "voodoo" chipset is regarded by the PC fraternity as the most powerful rendering architecture on the mass market at the moment and Sega's recent purchase of 3DFX stock allows them exclusive rights to all current and future 3DFX technology. In a single stroke, Sega have guaranteed that their next machine will have 3D far in advance of the competition whilst at the same time locking out this technology from its rivals.

In recent legal documents disclosed by 3DFX, it's revealed that Sega has acquired 700,000 of the 4,200,000 shares available giving it a 16% overall holding of the company. In these documents, 3DFX reveals in black and white terms that their technology has been reserved by Sega who control all rights as to the technology'\s distribution in home games consoles. The documents also reveal that Sega reserve the right to go elsewhere should they so choose should they wish to create their own machine as they did with the Megadrive and Saturn.

So what's the big deal with 3DFX technology? Why did Sega choose it and just how good is it? The answer is pretty obvious to any PC owner who owns a 3DFX card.



With 3DFX at the core of the new Sega consoles, ports like Quake 2 should be super-easy!

The system is incredibly powerful even in its first generation form and currently boasts some of the most spectacular 3D games for any home system. 3DFX-enhanced Quake boasts all the 3D features which make the N64 games look so cool, but improves on it significantly thanks to the far higher resolution. The speed of the game is also frankly amazing with a near rock solid 30 frames per second on any decent Pentium. Other stunning 3DFX games include Tomb Raider (again full 30fps action with stunning mip-mapping and supreme resolution) and Psygnosis's excellent Formula One.

Buying into 3DFX is a very, very smart move for Sega. Not only is the company the best there is at what they do, but the technology is also well liked by the developing community. Saturn development has been dogged by claims that the system is incredibly tough to get to grips with. With 3DFX technology in their next machine, it should make ports from PC - as well as original development - very, very simple. Additionally, 3DFX is also being used in many new arcade games and these should be able to reach the new machine with no problem at all. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE should stress that Sega itself has made no announcement about its next generation system, despite the huge amount of "BlackBelt" rumours currently circulating the Internet (BlackBelt was a codename for the new machine). However, with 3DFX now an affiliated company, Sega's future now looks brighter than ever before!



3DFX F1 is frankly stunning!



3DFX Quake on PC: just amazing!



One of the first PC 3DFX conversions was Tomb Raider, which looks briiilliant! Can we expect graphics of this quality in Sega's next console?



3DFX chipset power is the system of choice when running the forthcoming Quake 2 on PC (as pictured above). This sort of rendering power is promised for the new Sega machine!

wipEout 2097

When a top game appears, you can trust SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE to get hold of the FULL STORY first! So it is with Psygnosis' WipEout 2097. Now RICH LEADBETTER was quite disappointed with the conversion of the first game, but this new one is a completely different story. Read on...

I think I mentioned it in Virtua Writer this month, but the last time I even bothered to turn my PlayStation on was to play WipEout 2097. I'll quite happily admit that there are some types of games that the Sony machine was built to handle and WipEout was one of them. It's one of those rare games that manages to combine incredible gameplay with a stunning audio-visual hit. Trust me, play WipEout 2097 on a huge TV and Dolby Surround and you're hooked.

What? What do you mean you don't own a PlayStation? Well,





WipEout 2097 features some of the most complex 3D backgrounds in any Saturn title yet, not bad with such a smooth frame rate as well. Most impressive.





that doesn't matter now because WipEout 2097 is coming to the Saturn. In fact, the conversion is just about complete, hence its sudden appearance in the luxury offices of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE!

WHAT'S THE DEAL?

Think WipEout 2097. Think 30fps super-smooth action, the most detailed 3D environs in a racing game, think awesome music. Well, that's what it was like on the PlayStation any way. Surprisingly enough, the Saturn version is extremely close indeed.

There were two big problems with the original conversion of WipEout to the Saturn. First of all, the frame rate. It was a smooth 30 frames on PlayStation, a poxy 20 on the Saturn. The game derives a lot of its pleasure from the speed and fluidity of the action and for me this was ruined with the Saturn conversion. Secondly, gameplay. The PlayStation game was super-playable with instinctual controls. The Saturn version was almost totally different to control, the feeling of being at one with your vehicle almost lost. At least in mind opinion. Well, I'll expand on this later, but suffice to say that both of these problems have been truly SORTED for the Saturn rendition of WipEout 2097. Trust me, it's a really cool conversion with only a few compromises.





In the pic to the right you can see the mesh-effects. No transparencies here.



The lock-on effects are a lot more impressive to look at in WipEout 2097...

WHAT'S NEW?

We've all played WipEout, yes? So what's the big deal with this 2097 edition? And what happened to WipEouts 2 to 2096 (ZZzzzzz)? Well basically, Psygnosis will be the first to admit that they had to rush the first game onto the shelves to meet the launch of the UK PlayStation. There was tons of stuff they wanted to put into the game but couldn't because of that all-pervading deadline. So they aimed to put everything straight with the sequel.

The first thing they tackled was the difficulty level. The first WipEout was tough. Very tough for the average PlayStation player and Psygnosis aimed to redress this with the 2097 edition, making it slightly easier to begin with.

The next thing to address was the weaponry. In WipEout, the only effect a clean hit to your opponent would produce was a drop in speed. For 2097, each craft has an energy bar which is worn down with heavy impacts on the scenery and of courses successful weapons strikes. Should your energy bar disappear into nothingness, it's Game Over. If you're getting low on juice, pit in to the energy lane at the beginning of the lap.

If this sounds a bit F-Zeroish (a noted Super NES title), you'd be right. The programmers of WipEout 2097 are big racing fans and cite Super Mario Kart and F-Zero as two of their biggest inspirations. Take the energy bars and handling of F-Zero, add in the Mario Kart weapons system and a huge rush of speed and you have WipEout 2097!

LICENSED MUSIC? NO

One of the big draws for the average PlayStation punter was the inclusion of noted dance artistes on both WipEout and WipEout 2097. The latter edition even featured an instrumental rendition of the noted Prodigy number FireStarter, along with contributions with the likes of Photek, Future Sound of London and the omnipresent Chemical Brothers.

Well, none of these licensed tunes made it into the original Saturn conversion of WipEout and unfortunately, the sequel suffers from the same shortcomings. On the plus side, the non-licensed tunes, produced by Psygnosis' house band Cold Storage are pretty good. There are a couple of remixes from the original WipEout (and

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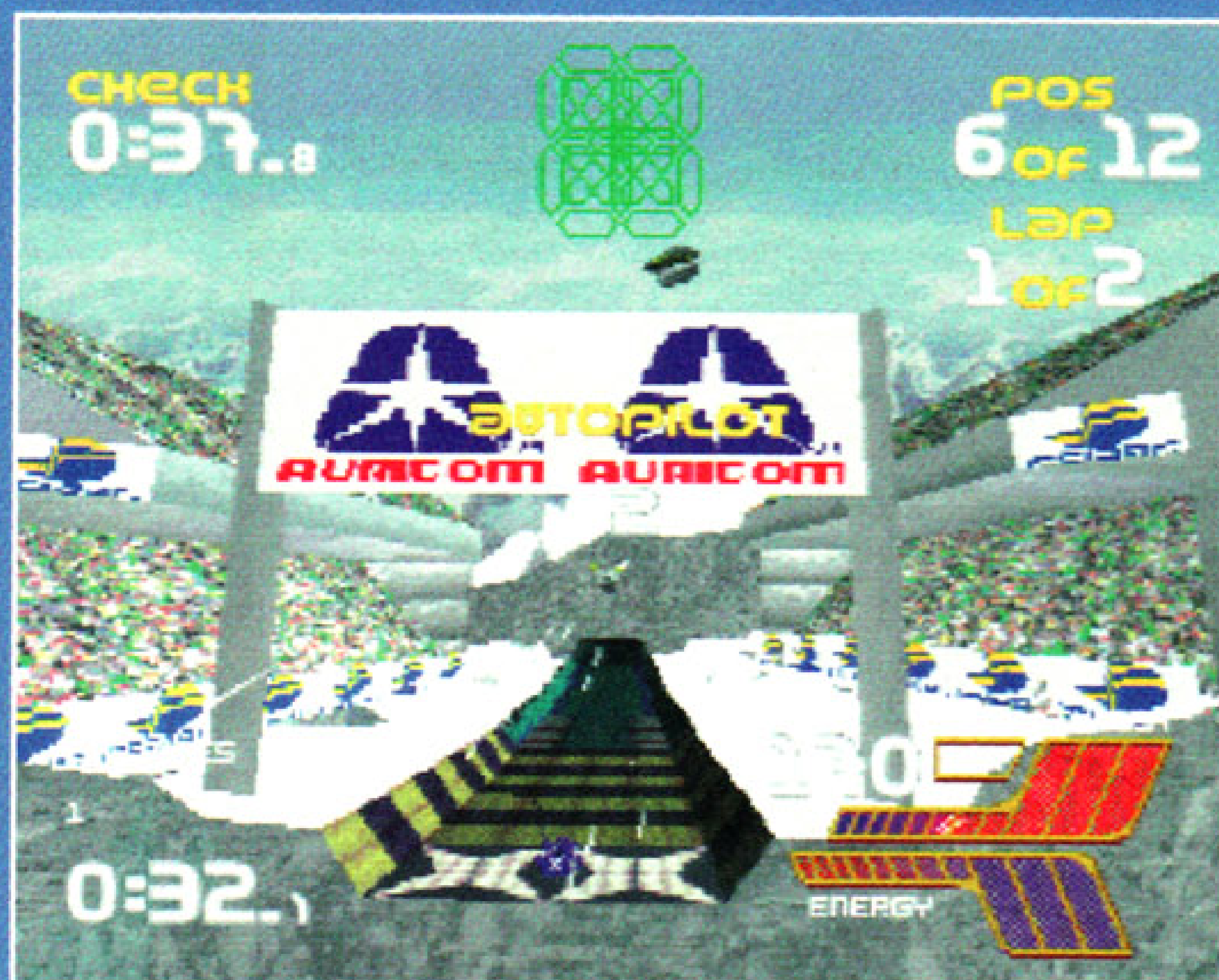
These two screenshots are taken from one of the more graphically dense levels. Looks great eh readers?

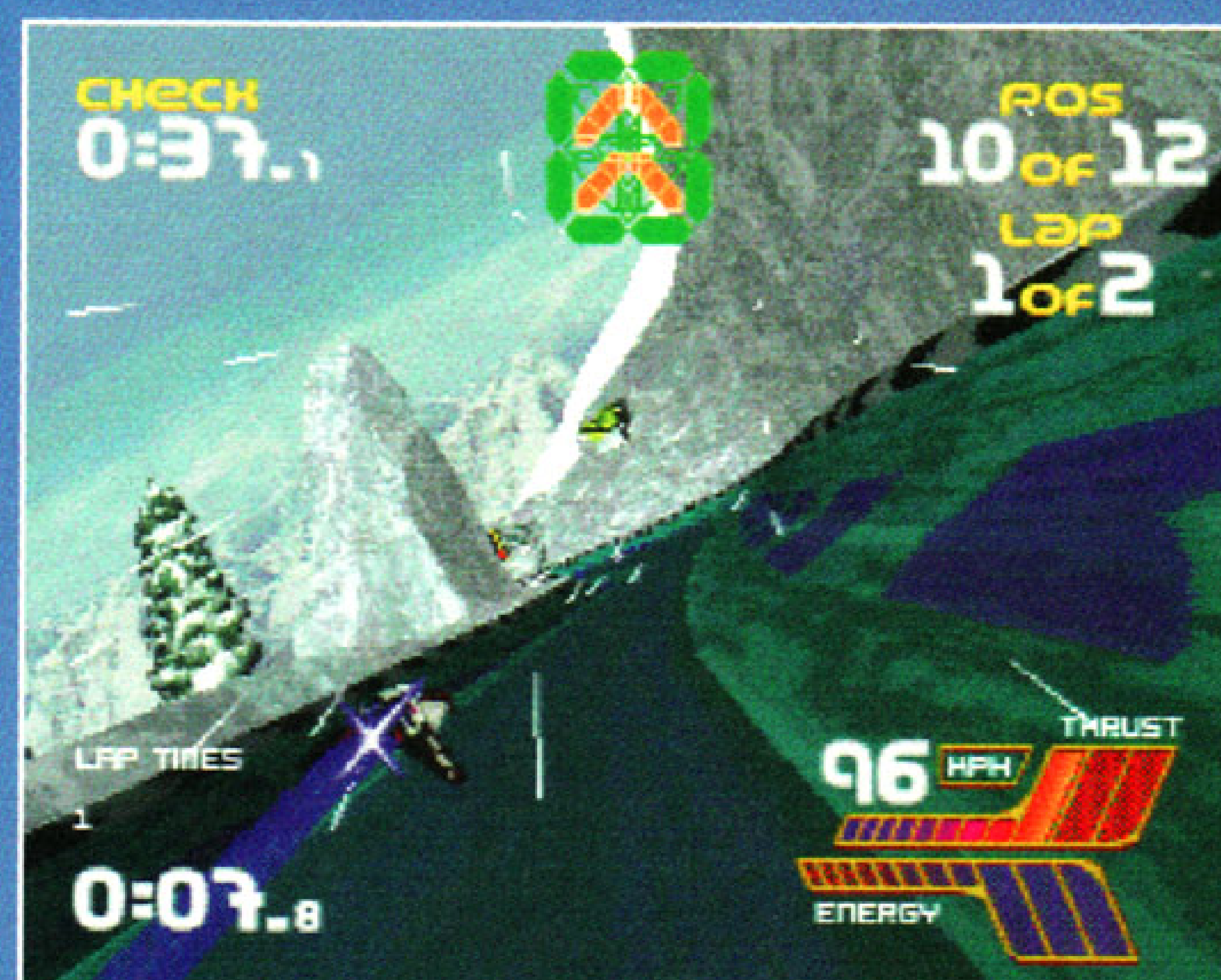
On this level you get all the flying snow effects that looked so cool on the PlayStation version of the game. Nice.

Below you can see the weapon in action that literally rips up the road, damaging all vehicles in front. This is the most impressive weapon...









Developers Perfect have produced an impressive conversion of the PlayStation's top racing game - all the speed is there!

they remain the best music) but there are plenty more original tunes. For me, they seem to lack real power - the kind of mega beats that the licensed tunes provided in spades on the PlayStation version, but you still can't really complain about the Saturn version's audio prowess.

WHODUNIT?

When you see WipEout 2097 you may be surprised to see that it comes from the studios of Perfect Entertainment who carried out the conversion of the original WipEout and (shudder) Destruction Derby. The same firm benefited from a great deal of assistance from Sega of Japan when it came to them producing the Saturn rendition of Manx TT SuperBike. Their coding talents produced the best racing engine on the Saturn for Manx, which ran at a smooth 30 frames per second AND shifted more 3D scenery around than any other Saturn title.

It wouldn't surprise us at all if some of this programming expertise was put to use on WipEout 2097. The smoothness of the game is a perfect match for Manx TT (and just a tiny, tiny touch less than PlayStation WipEout 2097) and the overall impression is very impressive indeed.

We took our hats off to Perfect for the conversion of Manx TT, but to be honest, we're even more impressed with what the firm has achieved with regards to WipEout 2097. The courses are a virtual match for the PlayStation version, the speed's there and most importantly, the handling of the hovering vehicles is 100% faithful to the PlayStation original. And for me, that's what's most important about the game.

THE BAD NEWS

Any conversion from one system to another is bound to involve compromises and no-one's going to be too surprised to discover what's different about the Saturn version of WipEout 2097 as opposed to its PlayStation cousin.

To begin with there's a very slight drop in resolution (you really have to look closely to spot this), but the most obvious compromise is with the transparency effects on the game (again). The light trails coming from the rear of each vehicle are meshworks, as are the shields (at least on the external view) and even the thrust indicator at the bottom right of the screen.

Still, it's the speed that's the thing and with its super-slick frame update (pretty much a constant 30 frames, although some of the courses are still to be optimised), WipEout 2097 really plays well indeed. Great news indeed.

When PlayStation conversions come along these days we

The particle system used to emphasise the best effects looks just as good on the Saturn version...









Rear lock-on weapons are new (left) whilst the right picture shows off the dynamic internal viewpoint.



The speed remains constant no matter how many enemy craft are on-screen.





Below: Damaged systems and overwhelming odds will test the mettle of even the toughest warrior.Below: Damaged systems and overwhelming odds will test the mettle of even the toughest warrior.

expect better (see Pandemonium) or other enhancements (Soviet Strike, Resident Evil). Even an option to use the analogue pad (to improve control over the PlayStation original) would have been appreciated, but there's nothing new at all in the Saturn version.

Still, to be honest, this is nit-picking, as I'm sure you'll appreciate. As I stated at the beginning of the piece, it's speed and gameplay that I'm concerned with and in this regard, Saturn WipEout 2097 is more than good enough! Besides, there is one clear advantage with the Saturn version - the loading of each track is tons quicker, which certainly helps!

WHEN'S IT OUT?

At the moment, although the conversion is nigh-on complete, there is still a great deal of work to be done behind the scenes in getting the game from development onto the shelves. For starters, no-one seems to be entirely sure who's publishing the game. It could well be the case that Psygnosis release the games themselves as is happening with Krazy Ivan, Adidas Power Soccer and Assault Rigs. However, discussions with Sega are currently taking place and it could be them who do all the PR and publishing for WipEout 2097. In fact, just who else is in the running? Er, no-one as far as we know. Still, regardless of who does the deed, the chances are that WipEout 2097 should hit European stores sometime in August or September.

Expect a full review of this top game sometime soon... maybe next issue if the time is right! Regardless, expect some cool stuff on this great game next month...

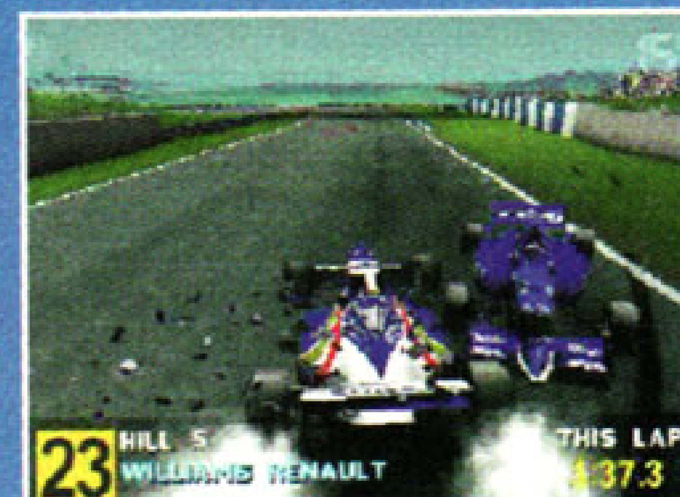


The scenery gets even more way out on the later tracks, as pictured above.

FORMULA ONE IS COMING TO SATURN!

After months of teasing you with little snippets of rumour and speculation, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE can finally reveal CONCRETE details about the Saturn version of Psygnosis' brilliant Formula One game! Well, for a start, it's in development now under the auspices of Probe Software in Surrey. It's conversion of the original PlayStation game (not the new '97 edition coming to the Sony machine later this year) and should feature just about everything from the original. The only question mark over the conversion concerns the Formula One license. FOCA, the body that licenses our the F1 name, usually supplies a window of time in which a product based upon a certain F1 season can appear. The window for the '95 season on which the game is based expired a while ago, so it's uncertain as to how Psygnosis will get the Saturn version out. Stay tuned to SSM for more details. Oh, additionally, we can report that Probe are also handling the conversion of Destruction Derby 2 for the Saturn... And no, before you start asking, we haven't had the opportunity to try out the in-development versions of either game...







So what's the bottom line on the Saturn conversion? Very good indeed, basically. Hopefully a review next ish?



The rapier level tracks feature super-speeds and sharp corners... a real test.

FIGHTING FORCE

Boosted by the phenomenal worldwide success of Tomb Raider, Core Design are now one of the industry's leading video game developers. Next up on their busy release schedule is the 3D scrolling beat 'em up, Fighting Force, a game that MATT YEO hopes will pack a powerful punch.



This time last year, Derby based Core Design were moderately successful third party Saturn developers, known for their quality 3D engines and their commitment to supporting Sega's gaming consoles. A case in point being Thunderhawk, the first Mega CD title to achieve record breaking sales and one that hinted at the potential programming talent that Core had assembled and the power of Sega's allegedly limited add-on. 12 months later and Core Design find themselves occupying the big leagues thanks, in no small part, to Tomb Raider, a game that delivered stunning 3D environments, challenging gameplay and a 36DD heroine to please Loaded lads everywhere.





Assuming you've read this month's news section first, you'll now be aware that Core Design have decided not to produce a Saturn version of Tomb Raider 2. While this announcement may be seen by some to be a knee jerk reaction, perhaps prompted by the Saturn's current sales figures, Core are quick to point out that they're definitely not abandoning development for Sega's 32-bit workhorse. Not one to rest on their laurels (or is that Lara's?), the company currently has a number of titles in the pipeline, with the much anticipated Ninja due out in early '98 and a potential blockbuster of a game that looks set to revitalise the side-scrolling beat 'em up genre.

Fighting Force looks set to continue Core's impressive track record by offering players a game that would appear to blend the non-stop action of such classic titles as the Streets of Rage series with the 3D sensibilities of Die Hard Arcade. Due for a September release, Fighting Force has been in development for just over a year and, until recently, was to be entitled Judgment Force. Regardless of name changes, the game still looks every bit as impressive as when we were first treated to a tantalising

>>





Fighting Force has been compared to the already available Die Hard Arcade. Well, although the basic premise is the same, Core's title should be superior thanks to more set-piece events and more of a 3D spin to the environment.







With Core's reputation for quality games Fighting Force should be a cracking beat 'em up – we'll have more updates in future issues!

>> glimpse a few months ago. The original intention was to produce a scrolling 3D multi-player beat 'em up that could be offered to Sega as a potential Streets of Rage 4. Sega were apparently interested in the concept but hinted that they had their own ideas for continuing the series and so Core decided to distribute the game themselves, confident that the high profile of Tomb Raider would also act as a springboard for Fighting Force. Core are now set to take this neglected style of game to dizzying new 32-bit heights.

MEAN STREETS

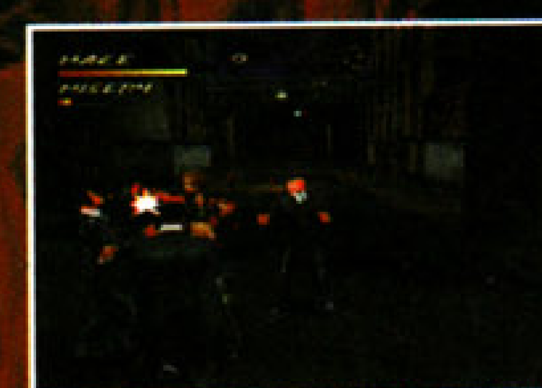
For those of us brought up on a staple diet of cliched American cop movies and classic episodes of the A-Team, the plot of Fighting Force may seem more than a little familiar. Set in the crime and grime filled streets of New York, players find themselves battling a seemingly endless horde of thugs and villains, before attempting to bring down "Mr Big". In Fighting Force, this role is filled by a character by the dubious name of Dr Zeng, a megalomaniacal genius bent on world domination and a man that believes it is his destiny to destroy the planet...

It is a few years since the dawn of the new millennium and Dr Dex Zeng is frustrated. As a former high-ranking and powerful government agent, who had dealings with the seedy New York underground, as well as being a renowned radical scientist and professor in Theology, Dr Zeng knew the end of the world would come in the year 2000. Days, weeks, months and now years have past and the world still exists. Events that were occurring towards the turn of the century confirmed to Dr Zeng that the Armageddon was coming. For those who possessed the right knowledge and experience, the signs were clear. Zeng was so sure of his findings that he also managed to convince many of his ex-employees, who just happened to be prominent members of various militia groups, and they helped him prepare for this almighty conclusion to history. Over the years, Dr Zeng has developed a megalomaniacal complex, at least partly thanks to the experimental synthetic drugs he has been injecting himself with. Like many power-mad figures throughout time, Zeng actually considers himself some kind of a keeper of the Earth, a guardian of the planet, the Chosen One.

On December 31st, 1999, after years of madness, Dr Zeng is on the threshold of a new age and at 12.01am, January 1st, 2000... nothing happens. All around him, thousands of people are celebrating and his rage starts to build. All that hypothesising, reading, researching and teaching couldn't have been wrong, could it? The world was meant to end, so surely something must have gone wrong. Being a scholar, Dr Zeng has a back-up plan and he is prepared to create the Apocalypse himself. With biological warfare devices, an army of followers and strong connections to New York's crime cartels, he is about to trigger worldwide >>



Super-moves are greeted with an on-screen flash, as seen here.





This roadside scene was one of the first levels that Core programmed into the game.





Meanies scream onto the screen in their cars (left), which appear to be fully destructible (right).



FIGHTING FACES
Here's the range of fighters available in Fighting Force. They're all skilled martial artists, although by our reckoning, half of them are actually cleverer than Albert Einstein or indeed Carol Voderman! You can bet they want be using their grey matter to get the job done though, unless Core's programmers have included the odd Countdown Conundrum or two in place of end-level bosses!



HAWK MANSON
Age: 26
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 196lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
IQ: 187
The lead character. Hawk is a tough, street-wise fighter who packs enough muscle to get the job done. He wants Zeng out of his city and aims to defeat the madman with his own bare fists.



MACE DANIELS
Age: 21
Height: 5'7"
Weight: 126lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Green
IQ: 200
A ballsy female private eye, Mace Daniels has been on the trail of Zeng for a number of years and always suspected that the crazy Doc had bigger plans for humanity.





Take Streets of Rage, add in a healthy dose of Die Hard Arcade and mix with some ace Virtua Cop style graphics and we have Core Design's piping hot Fighting Force, due this Autumn!





» destruction. Luckily for the planet, one of Dr Zeng's lab assistants, called Snapper, has seen just about as much as she can take and calls in some friends to help. Unwittingly, she brings together the most volatile fighting team ever assembled.

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

Taking on the role of a Fighting Force team member, players battle their way through a number of graphically varied stages, exploring detailed 3D environments whilst kicking some major butt. With a choice of four characters to select from, players have the option to face the forces of Dr Zeng alone or team-up with a fellow fighter thereby adding an all-important multi-player feature to the game. The action initially begins in the city itself with players proceeding along a dangerous route, one that takes them through many treacherous levels of a high rise tower block and culminates in a meeting with the game's arch villain. Along the way, they encounter Zeng's black-suited bodyguards, well-trained ex-military types who are keen to stop intruders from proceeding any further. This is where the real fun begins. Unlike traditional beat 'em ups, the combat in Fighting Force has been simplified and utilises the same basic three button set-up as Die Hard Arcade, yet it's possible for characters to pull off an amazing range of standard, special and power moves. Depending on their distance from an opponent, players are capable of performing a number of lethal holds, grapples, punches, kicks and throws with numerous combos just waiting to be strung together. All of this testosterone-fuelled mayhem is displayed with the same standard of smooth animation Core achieved in Tomb Raider. However, whereas Lara Croft only faced a handful of enemies at any given time, Fighting Force members have their hands full with up to six opponents on screen at once, each of which has their own range of trademark attacks and special moves. Each stage also culminates in an obligatory end-of-level boss, although Core are keen to keep these massive monsters firmly under wraps at the moment. Fortunately for our heroes, there are a number of items and secret power-ups to be located within each stage aiding them in their tireless struggle. These range from knives, bottles and metal pipes to destructive pistols, pump-action shotguns and flame throwers. With some careful exploration, certain stages also reveal such hidden weapons as rocket launchers, 30mm cannons and chainguns, ideal for blowing away the criminal element. But Core Design are also keen to emphasise Fighting Force's interactive elements, as indicated by the level of damage players have the potential to cause in each stage. So as team members thump and kick their way to victory, it soon becomes evident that the scenery is going to take a battering. Shockwaves from explosions shatter windows, fire hydrants flood the streets with water, parked vehicles suffer dents, with body parts flying off in all directions and shrapnel fills the air. Likewise, the 3D objects that inhabit this explosive free-for-all have their own uses with players having the option to use drainpipes, computer monitors and tons more.



The various vehicles and background scenery are rendered separately from the backgrounds. And here are four such objects.





Core are promising hod-loads of weapons for use in Fighting Force. As you can see from the selection on the picture to the left.

With up to six other characters on-screen along with the main fighters, Fighting Force promises to offer a huge wealth of hardcore hand-to-hand action. It's unlikely that Core Design will disappoint.







ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK

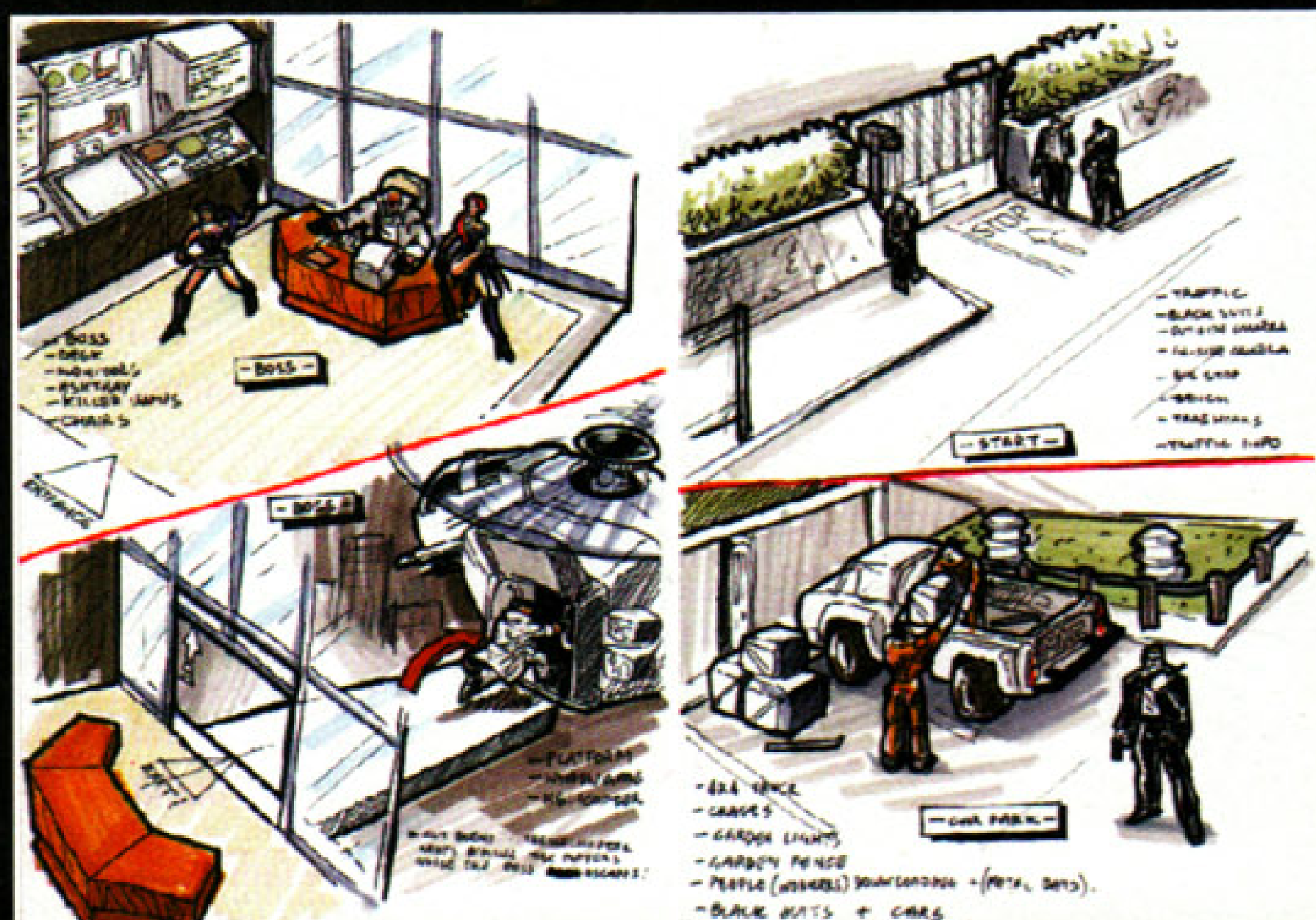
In an effort to boost the game's variety still further, Core have ensured that each stage offers a number of unique environments, presenting players with a selection of challenges. For instance, stage one sees the Fighting Force members battling through the New York streets, then through a mob-filled car park and into Zeng's city headquarters. During one section of the tower, players find themselves trapped in a glass elevator. The lift stops at a number of floors and vile villains pour in to give the heroes a good kicking. By using the available space to their advantage, players maximise their attacks and are even capable of sending enemies through the elevator's glass panels and down to their doom many floors below. Upon reaching the penthouse office, players fail to stop Zeng from escaping (don't worry, it's in the script) and pursue him to his secret base. Thus the action then switches to further levels, each of which features a number of possible play routes. As in The House of the Dead, by performing certain tasks, the game's structure changes accordingly, allowing full exploration of the many stages contained within. From the tower block, the action moves to a number of city centre locations, including an airbase and submarine dock, culminating in a history making showdown with Zeng at his secret fortified complex.

Fighting Force currently runs at a not too shabby 25 frames per second (or 30fps if you're after the NTSC version) and it's obvious from the levels that we've seen that the game only bears a passing resemblance to similar titles in this genre. While Core may have borrowed certain techniques and ideas from existing scrolling beat 'em ups, it's safe to say that Saturn owners are in for a real treat. With the market for this style of game virtually devoid of competition, there's certainly no reason why Fighting Force should fail to have as big an impact as Tomb Raider. Stay tuned for more coverage!





More fisticuff action from the game that was once known as Judgement Force... and indeed Streets of Rage at one point (until the license fell through).



STREET FIGHTING YEARS

Of course, Core Design certainly aren't the first company to dip their proverbial big toe into the bruised knuckle world of scrolling beat 'em ups, although few have had much success in recent years. The first big series to appear were the Double Dragon games, the last of which surfaced as a less than spectacular coin-op which disappeared shortly after. The Dragon's later made the leap to the big screen, a movie that's since gone straight to video, and then obscurity. On the other hand, the success of Sega's own Streets of Rage series is well known, with each additional adventure of Axel, Blaze, Skate and friends adding new gameplay features and characters. Even the mighty Capcom made their mark in this genre with the classic Final Fight series only recently running out of steam and characters from the series have even appeared in Street Fighter Alpha and Alpha 2. However, with the current state of scrolling beat 'em ups looking decidedly dodgy (witness The Crow and Batman Forever), Fighting Force should arrive as something of a breath of fresh air.







BEN "SMASHER" JACKSON
Age: 29
Height: 6'5"
Weight: 280lbs
Hair: Green
Eyes: Hazel
IQ: 106
Hired muscle and a long-time friend of Hawk Manson, Smasher is an unstoppable engine of destruction, working for whoever pays the most money. Although his loyalties are questionable, this man-mountain is reliable in a scrap.



ALANA McKENDRICK
Age: 17
Height: 5'5"
Weight: 108lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
IQ: 240
If living on the streets of New York has taught young Alana McKendrick anything it's that you need to be tough to survive. Quick-tempered and swift-footed, this nimble little minx looks up to Hawk as a personal hero and mentor.



DOCTOR ZENG
Age: Unknown
Height: 6'3"
Weight: 200lbs
Hair: None
Eyes: Grey
IQ: 300
Players won't be able to select Zeng but let's face it, who really wants to be a power-crazed maniac? Zeng represents the ultimate challenge for the heroes and failure to stop his plans will result in the destruction of the planet.

Resident Evil

One of the most popular PlayStation games last year on the PlayStation was Capcom's awesome Resident Evil. We knew a Saturn version was on the way, what we didn't know was how soon. LEE NUTTER takes a look at what could well turn out to be the Saturn game of the year...

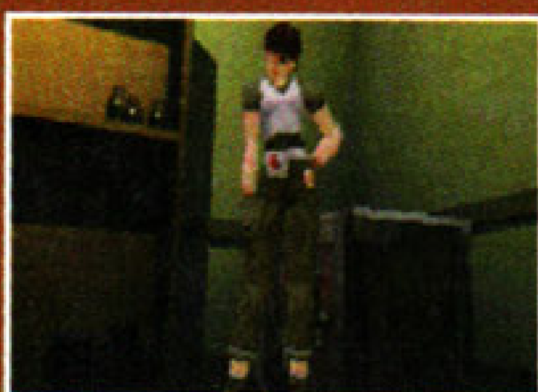


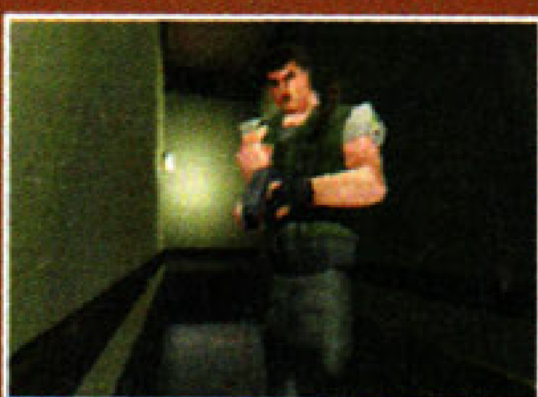






Just look at the quality of these screenshots. Mark our words when we say that this is 100% Saturn! Capcom have done us proud again with an incredible version of one of their best games!





Here we see two of the characters from the game. Although lacking shading, they look just as good as the PlayStation characters as indeed they should!

Let's face it, Resident Evil is an incredible and terrifying gaming experience. For Capcom's first foray into the realms of 3D, Resident Evil is an awesome achievement which upon the time of its release received rave reviews and much critical acclaim. The game uses a mixture of horror and puzzle elements to dramatic effect, creating an atmosphere unparalleled in any other videogame ever. As a result it proved to be immensely successful, surpassing Sega Rally Championship as the fastest selling CD game of all time. So why are we hyping one of the PlayStation's flagship titles? Well because Capcom's awesome horror-fest is the second so-called "exclusive" PlayStation title this month to turn up on the Saturn.

So what can Saturn owners expect, a poor second-rate conversion compromising the gameplay and losing the overall effect? Yeah right! The Saturn version of Resident Evil is not going to be as good as the PlayStation version... it's going to be better!

Capcom of Japan are renowned for being perfectionists with a meticulous attention to every conceivable detail as is evident from their 2D beat 'em up classics. So despite the high praise heaped upon Capcom, they weren't entirely satisfied with the finished PS version of the Resident Evil. Several ideas that the programmers had in mind for the game failed to come to fruition, so upon completion of the original game the programmers set to work on an enhanced version. The new version 1.5 would allow the programmers the opportunity to iron out the gameplay irritations of the original and incorporate those various elements that were absent. The new Resident Evil Dash as it became known was intended for release on the PlayStation some time ago, but failed to arise as it was canned not long into its development cycle.

The good news for Saturn owners is that the all-new enhanced Resident Evil Dash is the version of Capcom's masterpiece that Saturn owners are likely to be playing in only a couple of months' time, putting them firmly one up on PS owners. And it's going to be awesome!



THE PLOT THICKENS...

Like every good B-movie horror flick, Resident Evil Dash has a terrifying plot which unfolds and develops as you play. The story centres around the two main characters Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield, two members of STARS (Special Tactics and Air Rescue Service) Alpha Team. They are called to a place known as Raccoon City to investigate a series of grisly murders and the disappearance of the STARS' Bravo Team, with whom all communication has been lost. After a brief encounter in the woods with an unknown predator, Alpha Team seek refuge in a secluded mansion which, unknown to them is full of horrors the likes of which they have never seen before. Further investigation leads to the recovery of reconnaissance notes which reveal sketchy details of a company known as Umbrella who

バリー　バリーは!?

Resident Evil is one of the most anticipated Sega Saturn titles of 1997 and it's looking extremely close to the original – ace!

The agents meet up in the main hall of the mansion as the plot begins to unfold. Two characters are controllable – Jill is better equipped with a gun and lockpick. Chris is essentially a HARD difficulty level!

have been conducting genetic mutation research commissioned by the government. The aim of this research is shrouded in secrecy, with a cover-up under way to prevent details of horrific events leaking out.

Alpha Team's mission is to explore the mansion and eliminate everything within, locate the whereabouts of Bravo Team and find out exactly what the hell is going on...

THE EVIL WITHIN...

Put simply, RED is a disturbing and harrowing experience which players are proud to say they have endured and survived. The idea is to guide Chris or Jill around the dingy, claustrophobic and blood-splattered rooms of the mansion uncovering clues to the plot which remains shrouded in secrecy until the very end. All the while players are stalked by a bizarre series of genetic mutations, evidence if ever it were needed of a scientific experiment gone terribly wrong. From the flesh-eating zombies to the giant tarantulas, ravenous Dobermans and lizard creatures, danger is lurking around every corner and behind every door.

It quickly becomes clear that our brave investigators are ill-equipped to deal with the situation at hand, so survival becomes the primary goal. This makes locating the secret ammo stashes even more essential, whilst getting acquainted with the capabilities of different weapons.

But that's all by the by, the main interest of RED is clearly the gratuitous violence. To my mind there's no other videogame as blatantly gruesome, gory and stomach-churningly violent as RED. Frantically reaching for the shotgun and blowing the head clean off a zombie as a fountain of blood erupts from between its shoulders, is one of the most shocking, yet strangely satisfying moments in videogame's history.

However there's so much more to RED than the infamous blood-spilling sequences. There's a strong puzzle element to the game requiring much lateral thinking and forward planning. Some of the puzzles are self explanatory switches or locating certain items. But as players gain access to more areas of the grounds and the plot steadily unfolds, the puzzles become more complex requiring a much greater deal of head-scratching. However that's not to say that RED is a rock hard mammoth gaming chore reminiscent of Core's Tomb Raider. Capcom appear to have set the difficulty level just right, allowing novices to progress through the game with competence as Jill, whereas pro's are able to take their gaming skills to the limit as Chris.

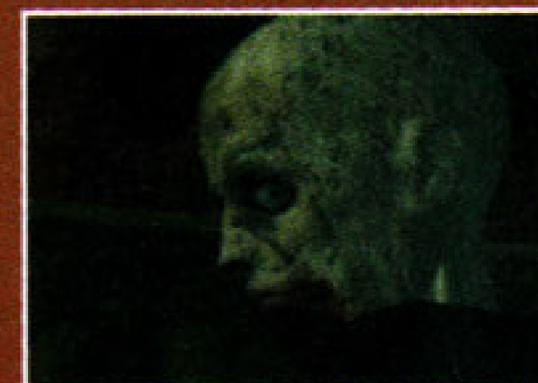
Graphically RED is in a class of its own, with the pre-rendered backgrounds looking absolutely stunning and exhibiting more detail than even the original PS version. From the blood-stained corridors to the dark laboratories, the level of detail and depth to each of the scenarios is incredible. The real stars of the show however are the hideous monsters which are superbly animated and chillingly realistic. It's almost a shame to blast them repeatedly in the head with a shotgun.

But what makes RED so undoubtedly great is the tense atmosphere upon which it thrives, keeping players engrossed in a

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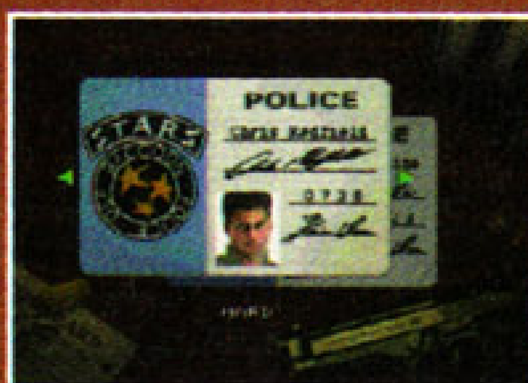


This section of the game looks just as good as the PlayStation version, albeit with superior quality backgrounds!



The zombie's feast is interrupted in the beginning of the game in one of the many cut-scenes.







The Saturn version of Resident Evil already has the front end of the PlayStation version (top), but with the enhancements Capcom are planning the Saturn should have the superior version!





Although shading is missing at the moment, The graphics are ace! We can confirm that all the violence of the original will be in there!

masochistic kind of way. The feeling of your imminent demise is intense throughout the game, heightened by the chilling Hitchcock-style tunes and the accompanying moans and groans from the undead. Add to this the dramatic fixed camera positions reminiscent of Alone in the Dark giving the game a cinematic feel to it and the scene is set for one of the most horrific games of all time. Enjoy.

THE SATURN VERSION

So obviously the big question on everyone's lips right now is what's new for the Saturn incarnation of Resident Evil? Well unfortunately, even at this late stage in development such matters are still up in the air as the precise details haven't been finalised yet. However, from the recent hints dropped by Capcom, it is likely that the game will play identically to its PlayStation brethren but with several gameplay tweaks and added extras.

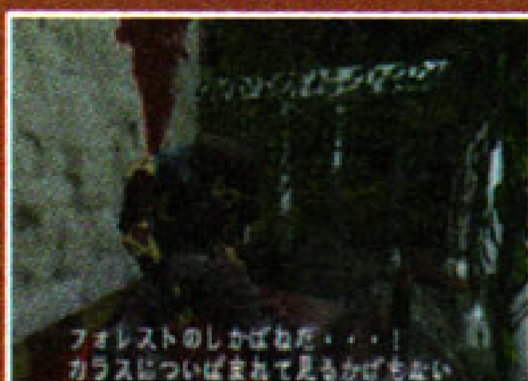
The main "tweak" and possibly the most exciting news is the slight plot modification to help smooth the transition to the sequel. This is almost certain to take the form of extra rooms not incorporated in the PS version and different endings to the game. Though neither of these were evident in the unfinished version of the game we've played, it is likely such additions would be one of the final programming tasks. As to the much anticipated sequel, nothing has been confirmed as of yet, with Capcom opting to gauge the success of RED before committing themselves to a Saturn sequel.

Further changes to the game are likely to include all-new secrets or at least changes to the ones all ready in existence, after all there's little point in including secrets everyone knows about. In the PS version of the game the costume of the characters could be changed once the game had been finished in under three hours, taxing even the most advanced players. However it has been rumoured for some time that the Saturn incarnation will feature a wider range of costumes which are selectable from the start. Other secrets included the availability of a rocket launcher when the game was finished in a set time limit. Again, with the PS game being available for nearly 18 months this is hardly a secret anymore, so could well be different for the long-awaited Saturn game.

In addition, speculation is rife at this point in time that other members of the STARS Alpha Team are playable, such as Barry and Rebecca with the plot being changed accordingly.

Well, unfortunately just as we went to press this turned out to be untrue. What can DEFINITELY confirm is the inclusion of new monsters not seen in the PlayStation original, along with a slight rejigging of the monsters' current positions in the mansion, designed to optimise the Resident Evil experience.

There are other additions to the game, but at this point SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE must remain tight-lipped. However, we'll have full news next issue! Do not miss it!



At the moment the plot's in Japanese! The version we saw was shown at the Tokyo Toy Show.

INEVITABLE COMPARISONS

Even before the Saturn version of RED was announced, technical issues of how the Saturn would cope with the polygon intensive characters and monsters were being raised. Well at last, having thoroughly played both versions of the game such matters can finally be laid to rest. Capcom have always maintained that the Saturn would have difficulty in replicating the monsters of the original RE, and indeed the polygon count for the models has been lowered to a more manageable number. However this is barely noticeable and certainly doesn't detract from the superlative gameplay. Also of note is that the gouraud shading which smooths over the polygon edges is absent from the two main characters in the 50% complete version we've played. This may or may not be added in the final stages of programming, we'll just have to be patient.

To compensate somewhat for these small deficiencies, the backgrounds of Saturn RED feature more detail and depth than the sparser looking PS versions and look quite spectacular indeed. Capcom have also put to good use the greater internal RAM of the Saturn to cut down the irritating loading times experienced in the PlayStation game. Aside from that, the whole game appears to be looking pretty much identical and features exactly the same sound effects, voice overs and some awesome FMV sequences.













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MARVEL SUPER HEROES





Finally! The wait for the sequel to X-Men: Children of the Atom is coming to an end. Marvel Super Heroes is coming to the Saturn and it's coming soon! What's more, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has seen it. Report by RICH LEADBETTER

The entire world, make that the entire cosmos, must surely know by now that I'm something of a Marvel Comics fan... and there's only one thing that I like more (well two things actually but let's not get into that) and that's videogames! Capcom obviously saw the potential of the Marvel license right away: not only do Marvel have the best concepts for super heroes (and indeed super villains), they also have the coolest super powers! Combine those extraordinary capabilities with Capcom's brilliant 2D fighting game system and we have a frankly stunning game.

The first taster we got of this brilliance was with the aforementioned X-Men: Children of the Atom. For the first time in history, Marvel fans were given a game that really got the most out of the heroes on which the title was based. Not only that, but Capcom redrew the characters in their fantastic cartoon style, without compromising the integrity of the original heroes! The result was one of the most enjoyable fighting games available... a game you can only get on the Sega Saturn!



The epic Spidey versus Juggernaut battle is restaged (left) whilst the X-Men Psylocke and Wolverine get rumbling (below).



ENTER... MARVEL SUPER HEROES!

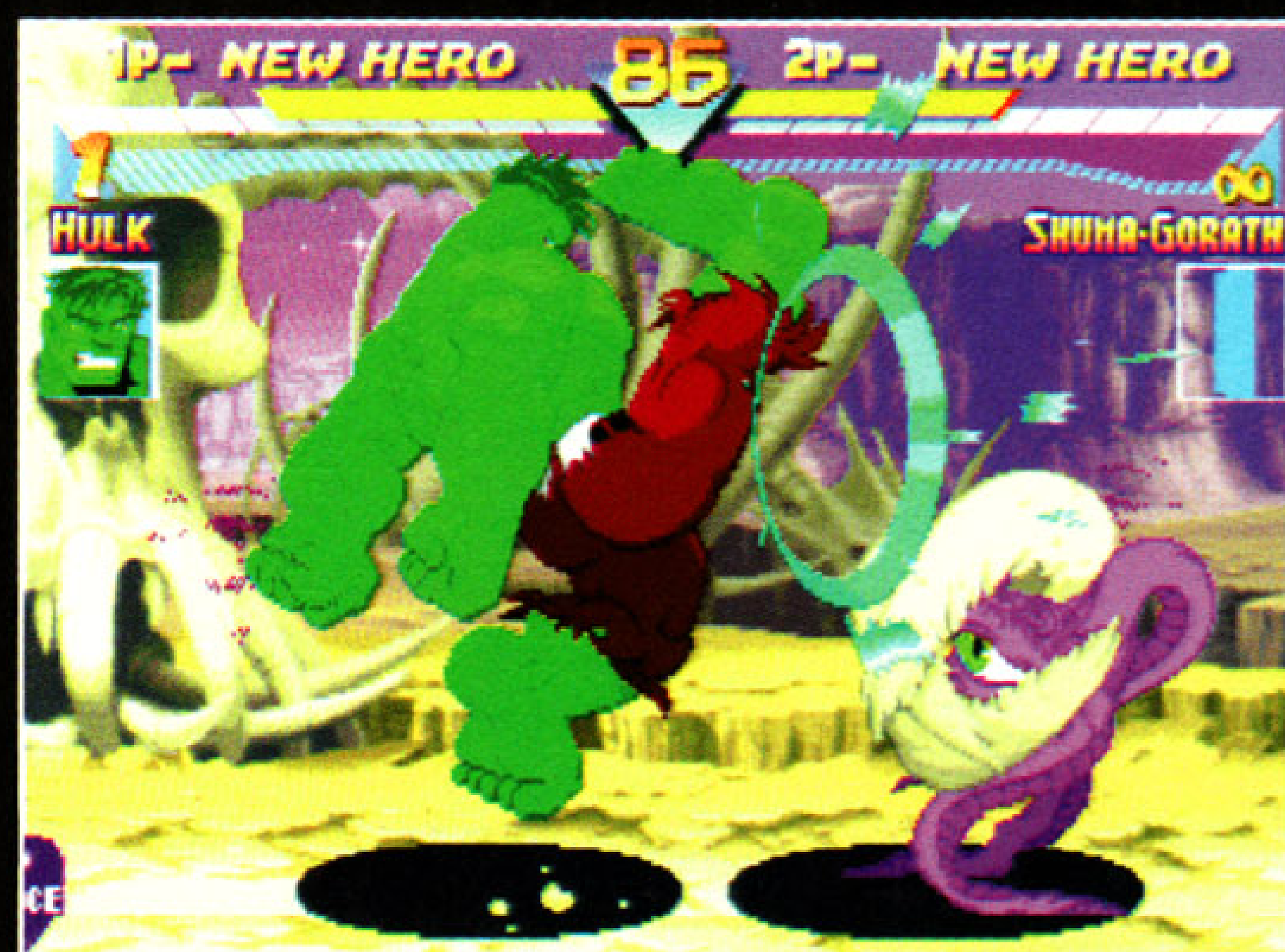
Capcom were very happy with the response they received from the gaming public and sought to create the ultimate Marvel based title. Just about the only problem with X-Men was that it failed to include the greats of the Marvel Universe... so there was no Spider-Man, Avengers, Fantastic Four or Doctor Doom! Marvel Super Heroes was the game to put all that straight.... well, apart from the Fantastic Four bit (boo!). Oh and there's no Silver Surfer either (double boo!).

Capcom added to the game's authenticity by basing MSH on the Infinity Trilogy of comics series which basically put every one of the eponymous Marvel Super Heroes up against the might of a maniac known as Thanos who controlled the whole fabric of creation itself with the mystical Infinity Gauntlet - a glove with five power gems capable of destroying all reality!

Thanos sought to become the consort of Lady Death herself by wiping out half of the lifeforms in creation and then challenging the universe's greatest heroes to battle in order to improve his beloved. And that's where you come in, fighting all manner of villains (and indeed heroes, for some reason) in order to face off against the evil Thanos in a battle with all creation at stake!

ROUND ONE... FIGHT!

Into the game proper and this is where the Capcom influence comes to the fore. Take Street Fighter, add in the Create-A-Combo system of X-Men and you have some idea of what this is like. The sheer range of animation on the graphics is frankly amazing, as is the inclusion of the Infinity Gems. When these crop up, you can make use of their various powers, all of which are different for the various characters. Speed-ups, power-ups and various other special effects are all included. More about that in the Showcase coming soon!



The Hulk gets brutal with little known villain Shuma Gorath...

Thrill to these bona fide Saturn shots of what could be the Saturn's greatest 2D fighting game! Stay with SSM for more mega Marvel mayhem!



SATURN VERSION: THE FACTS

When it comes to 2D power, the Saturn is in a league of its own, making it the only system capable of rendering the power of Marvel Super Heroes at home. Or is it? Having seen the Saturn version in action, we were immediately struck the lack of speed.

>>





The Hulk's Gamma Crush is one of the most spectacular special moves in the game. Oh yes this will be an ace title!



Blackheart is just incredible when played by an expert.



The golden Avenger's Proton Cannon. Amazing, yes?

THE HEROES!
Which champions of the Marvel Universe have you got to choose from in Marvel Super Heroes? Well, just about everyone you'd want bar the Silver Surfer and the Fantastic Four, basically!

SPIDER-MAN
Well, he can dodge bullets and lift ten tons in the comics, but in MSH Spidey's of average pace but with a supremely unique fighting style. His potential for combinations on both ground and air is staggering...

CAPTAIN AMERICA
The world's greatest hero, Captain America believes his faith and patriotism can overcome any foe. For MSH, Cap's a kind of enhanced Ryu figure, swapping fireballs for shield slinging action! Thumbs up, soldier!

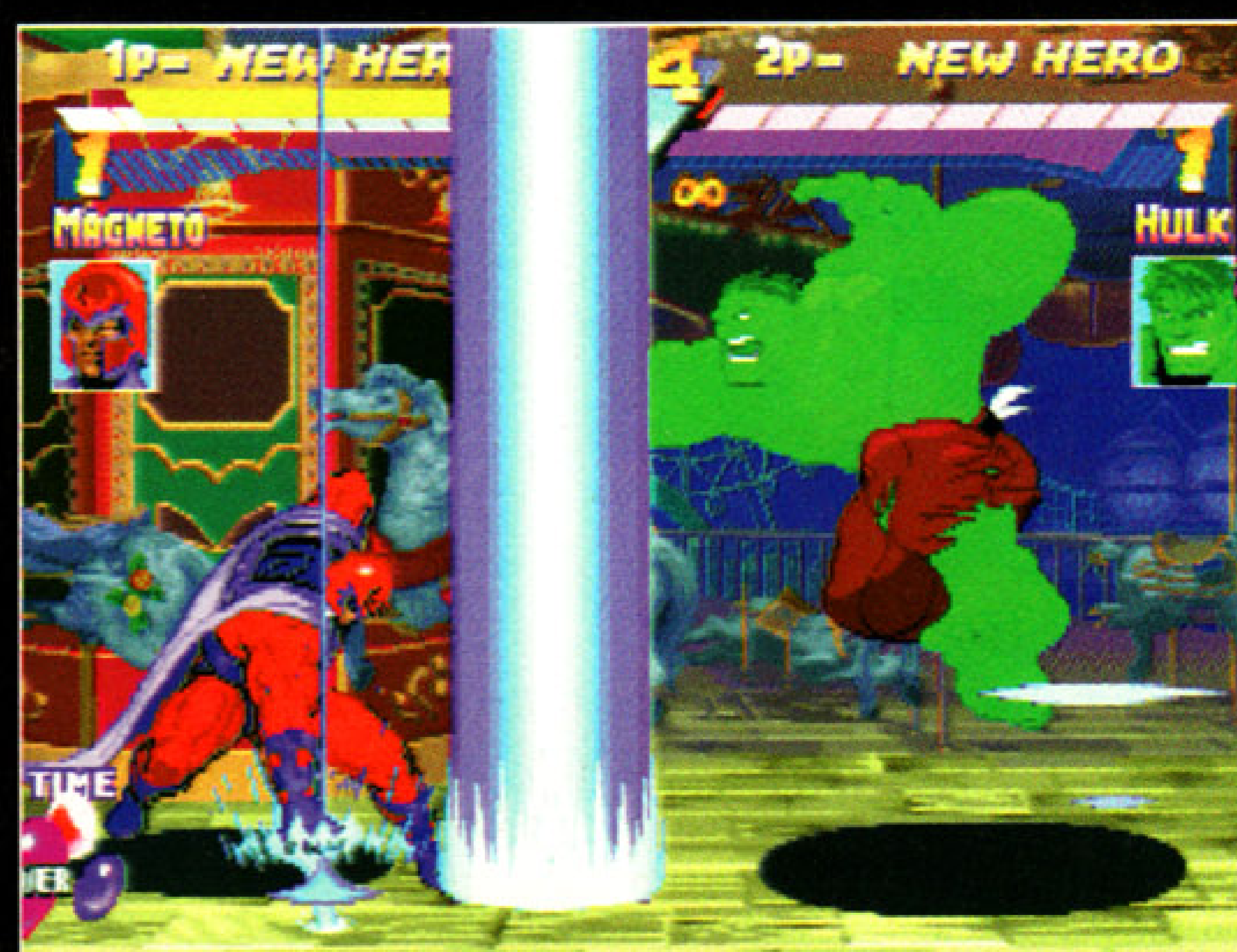
IRON MAN
The golden avenger's armour is packed with weapons of just about every description. Lasers, bombs, repulsor rays, you name it, Iron Man's got it. And just wait until you see his Proton Cannon Super Finish!

THE HULK
The strongest mortal creature on the face of the planet, the Hulk's strength is immeasurable, using it to leap up and bring asteroids crashing onto the heads of his foes. And just look at the size of him!

WOLVERINE
Put Wolverine into any Capcom fighting game and he's bound to win. Why? Well, Wolverine's just plain nasty and his moves are really, really easy to pull off. Can you say "Cheesy"?

PSYLOCKE
Psylocke's super-fast and excellent for combos. Perhaps too strong.





Capcom are the masters of 2D programming and the Saturn's easily the machine most capable of a memorable Marvel translation! Already the graphics are arcade perfect - now only speed is the issue

Capcom assures us that this is because the code is unoptimised - they'd only just put in the big characters like Blackheart and the Hulk, with the sprite-rendering system not designed for that kind of size of sprite.

Still, the game was only 50% complete when we saw it and besides, Capcom are throwing about sprites of similar size in Cyberbots and Vampire Hunter with no problems at all. Trust us, the speed issue will be sorted out.

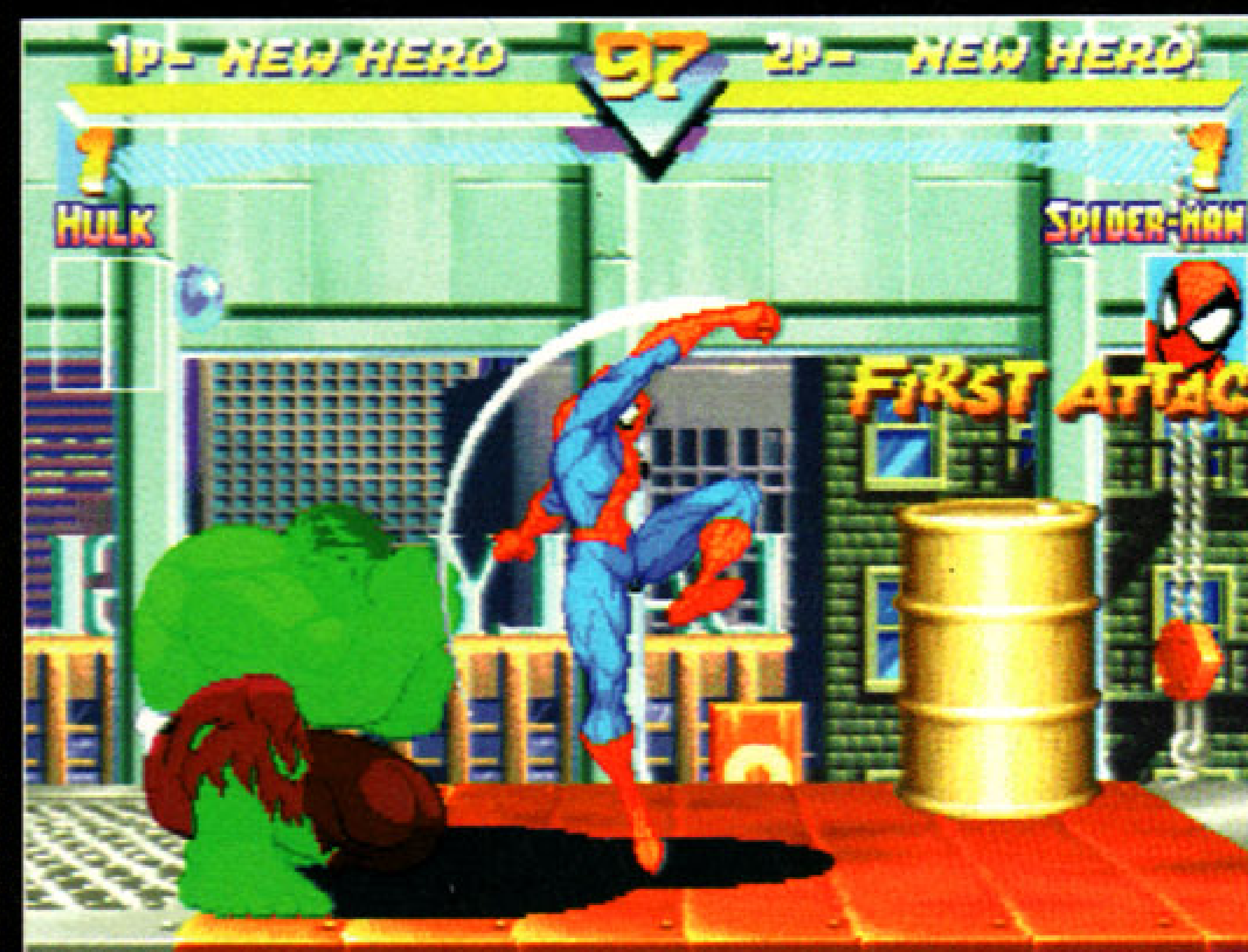
The version of the game we saw also made use of the memory cartridge SNK are using for their coin-op conversions. In fact, the version we saw won't run without it! There is some confusion over whether the final game will ONLY work with the RAM cart installed. It's certainly the case at the moment, and if so, Sega Europe will HAVE to get the necessary hardware on the market now! We hope that Capcom will go for cart compatibility but also make the software work without it (with some animation missing) a la Cyberbots. We'll keep you posted. It would certainly be a shame if we missed out on what is potentially one of the best 2D combat games just because Sega won't release a cart they could easily put on the shelves for at most £20.



WE'VE SEEN THE PLAYSTATION VERSION TOO

Capcom didn't even try to convert X-Men to PlayStation. Acclaim tried. And failed. So just how are they going to convert the even more graphically demanding MSH to PlayStation? Well the version we saw (which uses no extra memory carts) is a shadow of its arcade (and Saturn) self. The gameplay's all there, but the animation is severely cut down. How does it handle the big characters? Er, well, the version we saw only had the little ones in it!

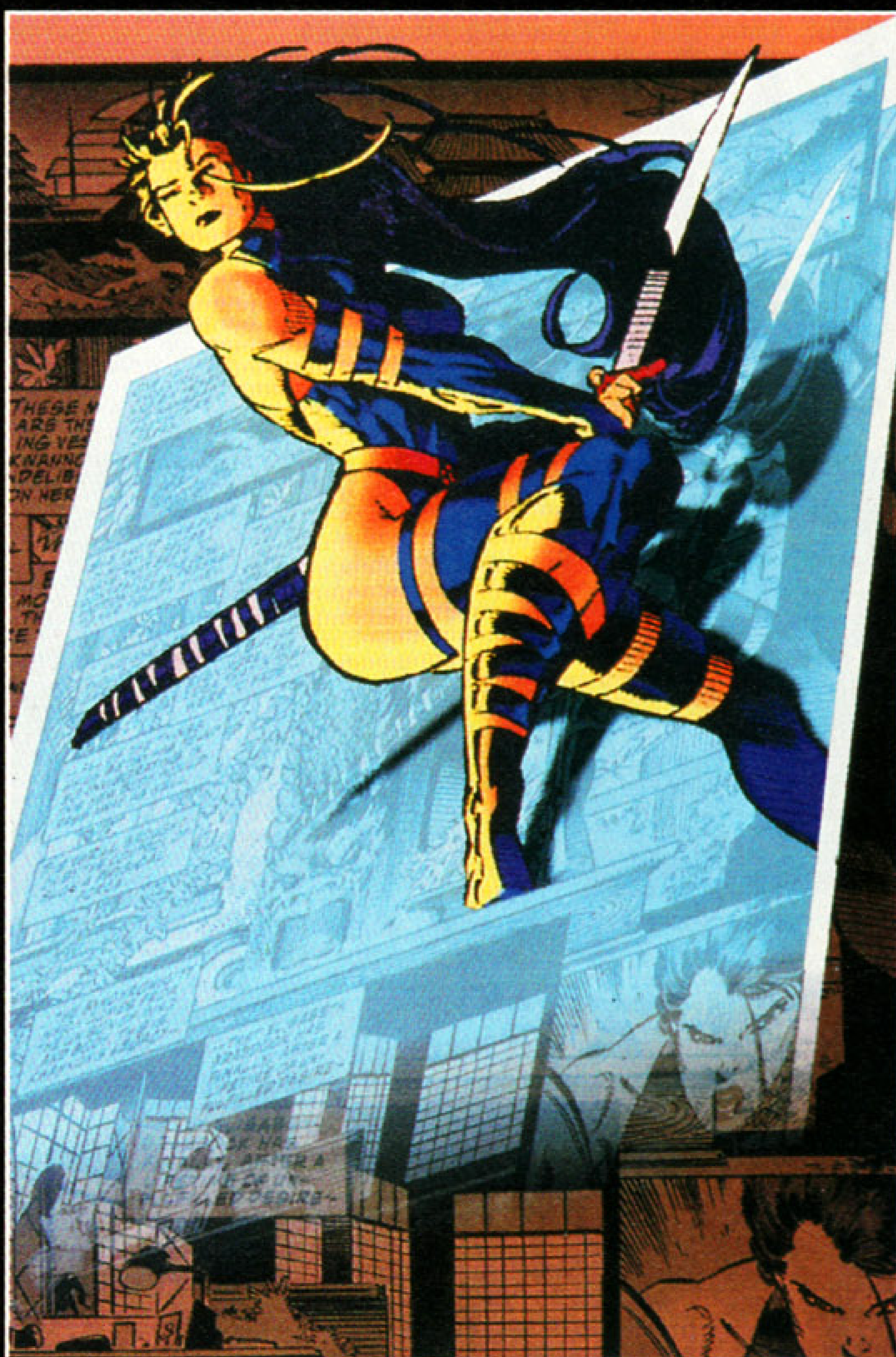
The PlayStation version should be good once it's complete, but for better speed and superior graphics, the Saturn version is the ONLY version! Oh yes...







These shots show that Saturn Marvel Super Heroes is shaping up to be arcade perfect, thanks to the power of the extra memory cartridge!





Wolverine (above) returns from his activities in X-Men; Children of the Atom. In that game he was cheesy - in Marvel Super Heroes he's even more powerful, his special moves even easier (if that's possible) to execute!

FINAL ROUND: FIGHT!

Marvel Super Heroes is set to go on sale in mid-July... in Japan. We have no news on the European version other than the fact that Virgin Interactive are Capcom's publisher of choice. Since Sega themselves make the memory cartridges, it's extremely unlikely that the European version will come with the add-on so unfortunately it looks as though a visit to your import emporium is on the cards if you want the ultimate Marvel experience!

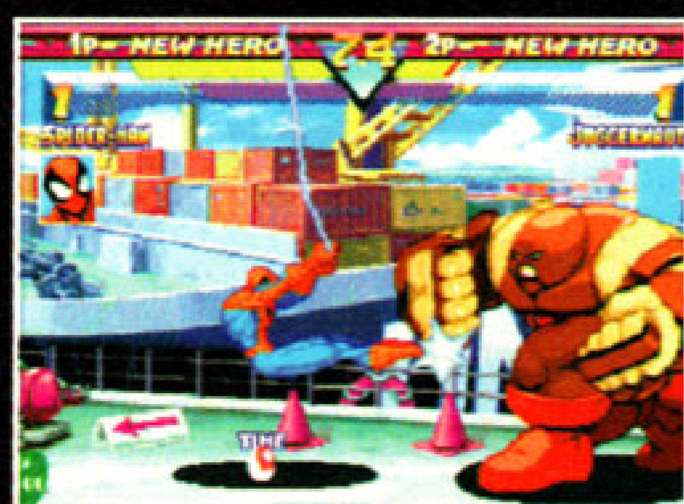
Still, it's this sort of game above all others that separates the Saturn from both the N64 and PlayStation as the ultimate gamer's machine!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE aims to continue to keep you fully informed about this most important videogame. Expect a mind-rending showcase in the issue-after-next. Maybe next month if we're really feeling nice.

BIGGEST SPRITES EVER!

Check out Marvel Super Heroes when you're next in the arcade. Play HUlk versus Juggernaut or Blackheart versus Blackheart. Now you know why Marvel Super Heroes has been such a long time coming. This game pushes the CPS-II system to its very limits with an on-screen sprite onslaught the likes of which you've never since before MSH or indeed since. Even the Saturn's going to have trouble converting this kind of 2D power, but Capcom are confident...





INFINITY X-ATTACKS!

The best thing about Marvel Super Heroes is the incredible Super Combos, or Infinity Attacks as they are known. These work in exactly the same way as the X-Attacks in X-Men: Children of the Atom. Check out Spidey's awesome Maximum Spider, or Cap's Final Justice. Or watch the Hulk jump up into the stratosphere and bring an asteroid crushing down on his opponent in his mega Gamma Crush! Play Marvel Super Heroes and know the power! It truly is one of the best 2D games in existence and it's going to be best on the Saturn.and with the genius intellect of Bruce Banner at his command, he's a canny fighter



THE VILLAINS!

The selection of villains in MSH is a bit hit or miss. Magneto, yes. Doctor Doom, definitely. Juggernaut? Er... Blackheart? Eh? Shuma Gorath? You what!

JUGGERNAUT

Another character back by popular demand. Equivalent to the Hulk in terms of strength, speed and mass. Juggernaut's been toned down from his boss-level performance in X-Men. Just as well...

MAGNETO

Master of magnetism, a powerhouse of terror! Again, like Juggernaut, he's been toned down from his super-powerful status in X-Men, but still has all the same evil moves!

BLACKHEART

Capcom have recreated Blackheart as a Vampire Hunter kind of character and he's mega! His soul-rotting powers make him one of most original fighters in any 2D brawler.

SHUMA GORATH

Shuma Gorath!?! He cropped up very occasionally to cause Doctor Strange some aggravation but what's he doing here? Still, the imagination behind this character is ace!

BOSS ONE: DOCTOR DOOM

The best villain in the whole world ever, Doctor Doom combines the technology of Iron Man with the extraordinary genius of Mr Fantastic. Oh, and he's also quite mad.

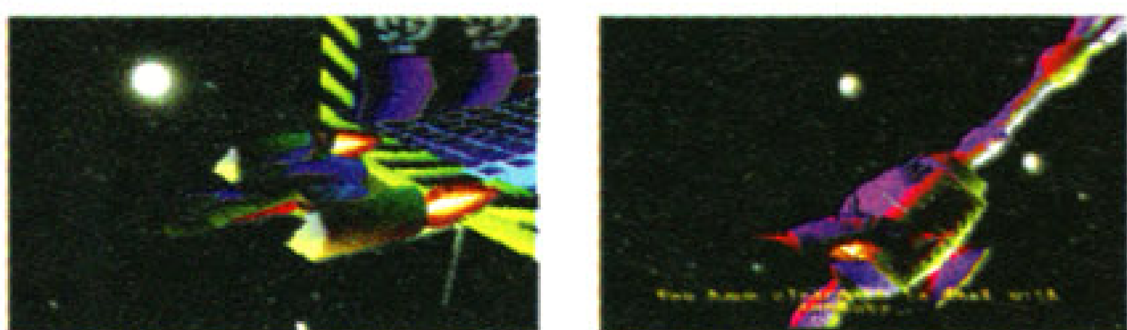
FINAL BOSS: THANOS

This guy's just plain lost it. Owner of the omnipotent Infinity Gauntlet, he's vastly powerful. Now he's decided to pick a fight with all of creation!

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

Considering the success of inter-stellar shoot 'em ups on the PC with X-Wing, Tie Fighter and so forth, it's perhaps odd that none have filtered through to the Saturn. Enter Darklight Conflict... the first of many?

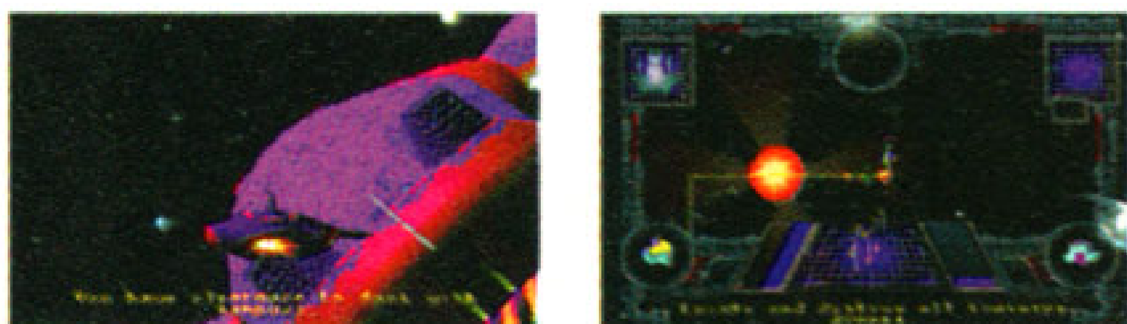
BY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	TBA



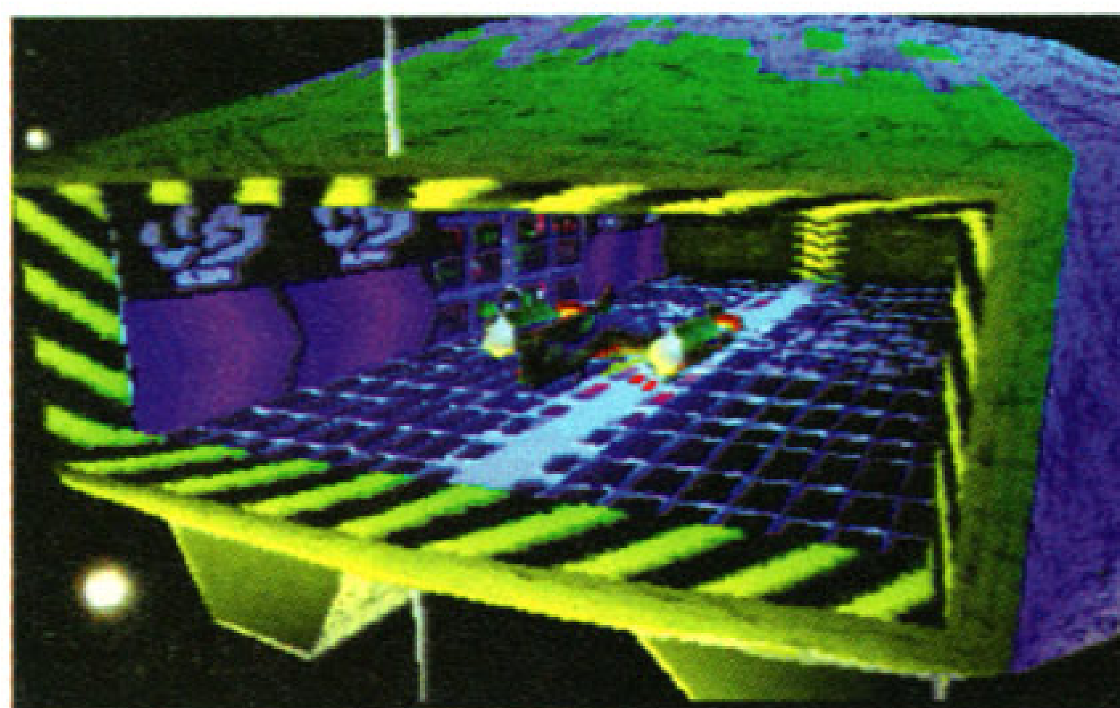
Wing Commander, bah! Who needs it when we have this, eh?



The cockpit view is rather less visually appealing than the others, but allows players to view the control pannels of the craft.



Cue the innevitable caption of being about to "Wup ET's ass!".



The spectacularly light-sourced landing bay of the mother ship.



The mission briefing screen outlines the nature of the tasks.

The name "Rage Software" is one that incites SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE to riot. The British coders single-handedly robbed Saturn owners of a decent conversion of one of the greatest videogames ever created. Their half-baked rendition of id software's classic Doom is one of the worst ever seen. A crime for which they ought never to be forgiven. By way of redeeming themselves somewhat, Rage's latest offering is a distant relative of the classic Elite and could well turn out to be a very fine blaster indeed.

Darklight Conflict features a plot worthy of a place in the X-Files with references to the Roswell Incident, Area 51, and alien DNA. But that's all by the by, as Darklight Conflict is essentially a straightforward shoot 'em up. Players are required to pilot a variety of hi-tech space crafts through 50 or so mission-based levels. Each of these crafts are tooled up with an array of weaponry, ranging from laser cannons to tractor beams, missiles and smart bombs. Space crafts also come equipped with a shield, surrounding them in a glowing aura to protect the craft from incoming enemy fire, though excessive use of the shield drains the energy generator rendering the defences and weapons inoperable.

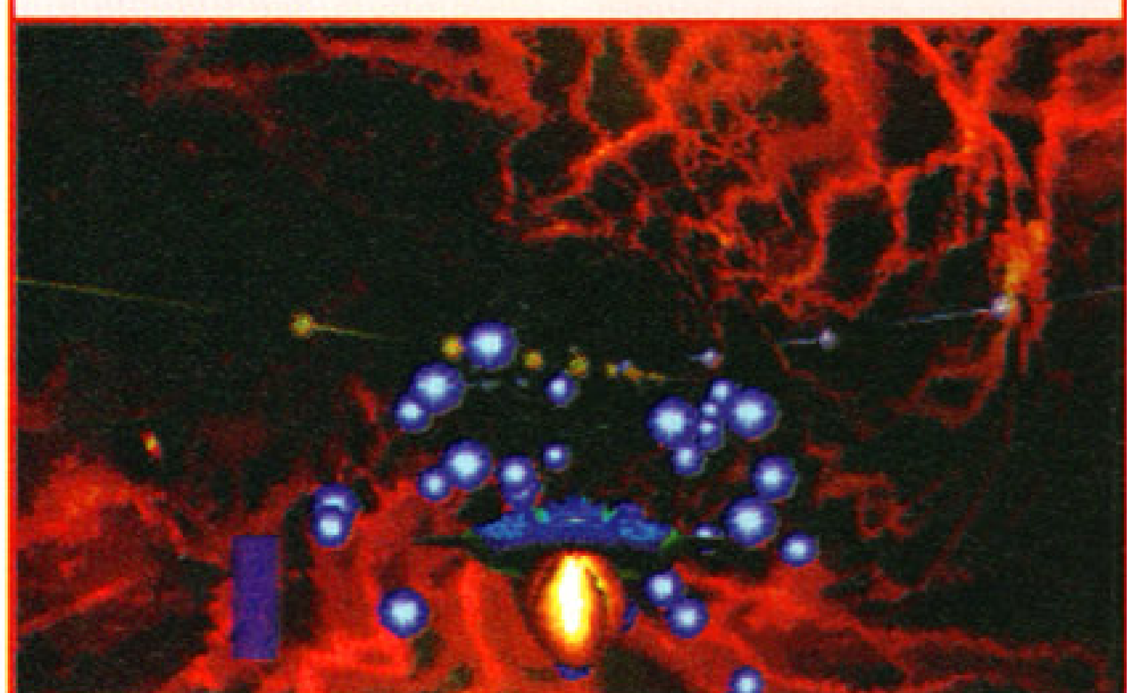
To begin with, players undergo a period of training whereby they become familiar with controls of the craft and encounter various simulated scenarios likely to crop up when the missions begin proper. Therein prospective pilots are taught the finer points of landing a multi-million pound space craft and the targeting and annihilation of other space craft. Once players have completed their tough training regime, the game really gets going.

From here on in the action is similar to Elite or X-Wing, with players locating the space portal and travelling through the time-space continuum which links the various missions together. When players emerge in a new galaxy, various mission objectives await them ranging from cleansing sectors of space pirates to the more bizarre tasks of mining ore from the asteroid belts.

Darklight Conflict is running on a most impressive engine with decent speed, solid 3D space craft and some spectacular lighting effects, albeit not quite on par with the PlayStation version. When combined with the involving mission based gameplay and the uniqueness of this title on the Saturn, EA could well have a winner on the hands with Darklight Conflict. But you'll have to wait until the next issue to know for sure.

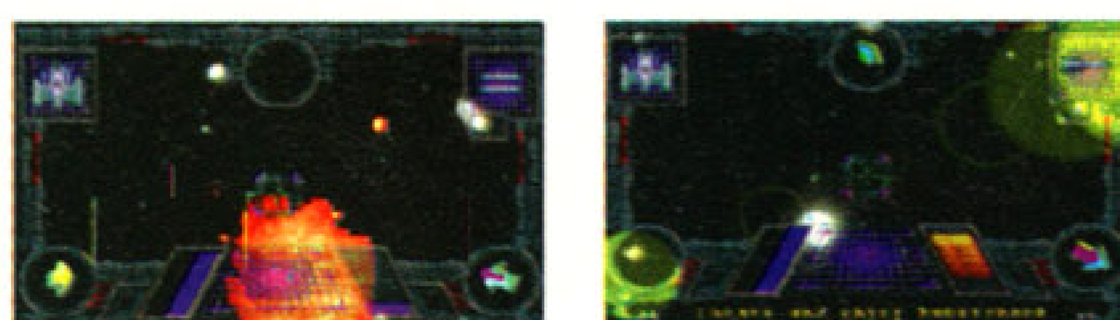
THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Once players have alighted from the mother ship, it becomes necessary to locate and pass through the space portal device, linking together the different play areas of the game. Rather than being just a cut sequence between levels however, the space portal device allows players to replenish their ailing energy bar by collecting gold orbs whilst avoiding the energy sapping blue orbs. Oh yeh, and it looks quite spectacular as well.

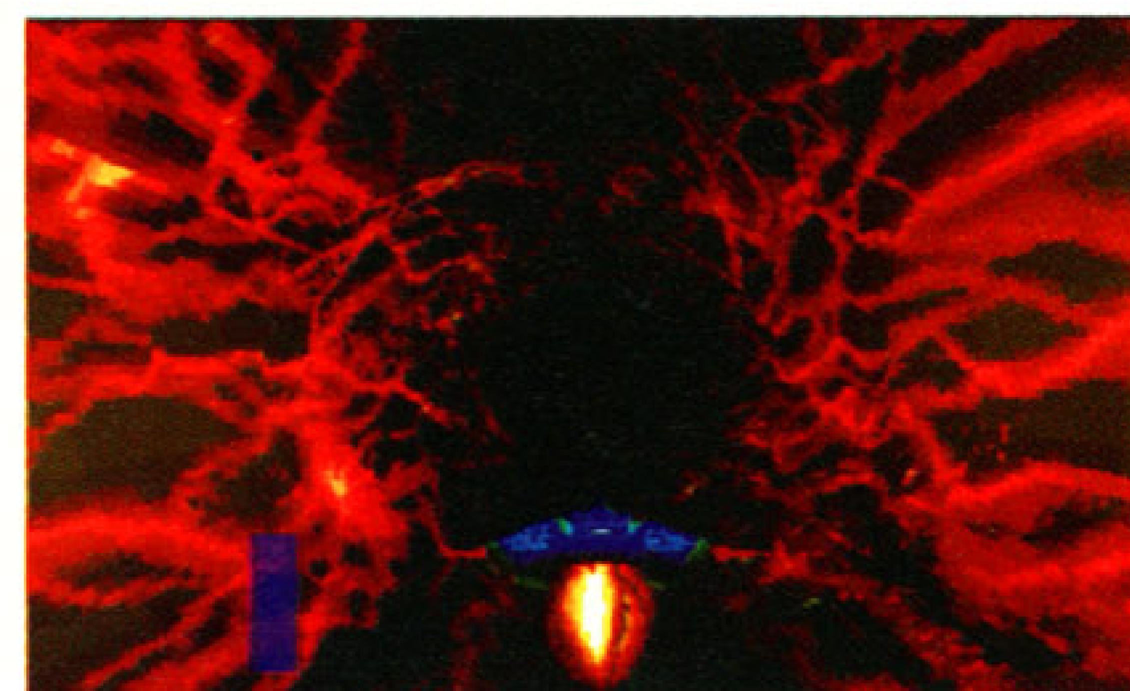




The enemy drones are superbly detailed, using a technique known as Bump-Mapping to display real textures. Intriguing.







Almost like a scene from one of the Bill and Ted's films, the space portal takes your craft through the tubes of time.

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WARCRAFT 2: THE DARK SAGA

The struggle of good versus evil resurfaces once again this month, this time with Electronic Arts' Mediaeval real-time war sim, Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga.

BY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	STRATEGY
RELEASE	TBA



A large range of backgrounds are in there with over 100 maps.



Real-time point 'n' click war sims are very popular at the moment on the PC, so it's rather disappointing that only the excellent Command and Conquer has thus far arisen on the Saturn. Keen to seize on the apparent niche in the 32-bit market, EA are readying for release Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga. Based on the popular PC game, the Saturn rendition is a conversion of Warcraft 2 and the Portal Expansion Pack, and could well prove to give the seemingly untouchable C&C a good run for its money.

Warcraft 2 sets the player in a real-time Mediaeval fantasy world where a ruthless clash is underway between the human and Orc civilisations battling for supremacy. Players are able to take command of either of the two opposing forces in an attempt to construct and rule their mediaeval empire in the land, sea and air. However, neither of the two opposing factions are able to simply march over to the other's base and give them a brutal kicking, after all, Warcraft is a strategy game. Brutality comes later.

To begin with it's a case of forward planning, prioritising tasks and effective management of the limited resources. For example, to amass a sizable army capable of taking on any aggressors, players should begin by training the local peasants. Training costs money which in turn means that gold needs extracting from the mines by the few available men. Once the peasants are trained they need feeding, food comes from the farms, the farms are built by the peasants after harvesting the forests and so forth. Whilst this may sound quite complex requiring hours of ploughing through a lengthy instruction manual, the game is actually very simple to get to grips with and accessible even to newcomers.





Eventually players will have amassed a force with which to advance into enemy territory and execute with extreme prejudice their battle plan. Therein players are able to command their troops with the familiar point 'n click control method allowing orders to be changed at a moments notice.

The alpha version of Warcraft 2 we've just taken delivery of is shaping up extremely well and could pose a serious threat to Command and Conquer's domination over this genre. Over 52 levels are promised for the finished version, with different mission campaigns and objectives set across over 100 customisable maps. Watch out for the review in a forthcoming issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE.

IT'S WAR OUT THERE!

Similar to Westwood Studios' immensely popular Command and Conquer, EA's Warcraft 2 allows players the opportunity to play as either of the two warring factions. Take command of the evil Orc population and watch in horror as they brutally murder your fellow humans. Or take command of the human civilisation and kick some Orc ass all over the kingdom of Azeroth with much bloodshed ensuing.









All-new FMV clips have been added to assist in setting the scene and helping the story to unfold.



The point 'n' click control method will appear very familiar to veterans of the classic C&C.



Dodgy photos wanted.

I've seen prettier mugshots on Crimewatch.
Dodgy snaps. We've all got them. Mates, teachers, mums and dads looking like complete drongos. Dig 'em out, and send them to us.
We'll **EXPOSE** the most desperate cases during
The Chart Show, every Saturday morning on ITV.

Send all photies along with both yours and the saddo's name and address, plus a Tizer ringpull or bottle top, to ***REFRESH SOMEONE'S HEAD, FREEPOST SL966, SLOUGH, SL1 5BT.***

And because we're such lovely generous people, everyone who sends in a snap receives a **Free Tizer Sabotage Pack**. These are isolated incidents.
So please, don't have nightmares.
Together we can Refresh the Heads of the Nation.



Refresh Your Head

Virtua Writer™

Mothers playing games. A severely disturbed Aussie, dodgy release dates and more Sony paranoia. That's the best of a bad bunch this month I'm afraid, so let's get some more interesting letters, eh? Not ones that start "This is the first time I've written to a games mag before... so please print my letter." And no more oversees letters begging for demo discs either, they wouldn't even work on your bloody Saturns. Send your letters to: VIRTUA WRITER, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, The Isle of Dogs, London, E14 9TZ. Who knows, you may even win a much sought after VF3 book!

DOOM DEBACLE... AGAIN.

DEAR SSM

This letter may seem to be dredging up the past by centring on spiked comments made by previous EMAP editors (Mean Machines Sega, anyone?) but, in the land of bated breath (ie Australia) where UK periodicals are summarily delayed... by MONTHS, it is quite timely. Almost.

Hence, the collective "kicking" cum murderous assault exacted upon Saturn Doom. As one of the slavering, Doom deprived Saturn faithful, I was eager as anyone to give Doom a "fair shake". It's obvious that Rage Software have stumbled badly with this conversion but, Doom being Doom I refused to accept that its playability was neutered. Even as I grappled with the "gridlock" that is Perfect Hatred perfectly cursing the curse of Rage, I was never once deterred or remorsed by my purchase (of Saturn Doom). Yes, the almighty Exhumed has shown the pretenders a thing or two, but let's face it, the kill count (in that game) was well below par. At least Doom delivered, albeit in a groggy stupor.

As to the pitiful ratings afforded to Saturn Doom in both SSM and the dearly departed Mean Machines Sega, how can you possibly justify 56% and 39% respectively when your own hearty recommendations (for Alien Trilogy) are utter ARSE?

I bought this limp, wheezing excuse for a game on the basis of many favourable reviews (yours included). But, due to a broken control scheme and the worst sprites I have ever seen in ANY GAME (16-bit included), I immediately replaced with vigour.

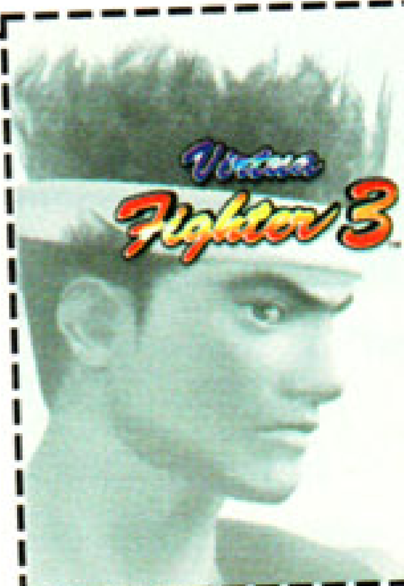
Unfortunately the harsh, virulent words that have been heaped upon Doom by outstanding journos like Angus Swan and Richard Leadbetter cannot be replaced, nor redeemed and we the Saturn-loving community must bear the scars forever. Shame gentlemen, shame!

Steven Wrangell, Australia

This comment may seem to be dredging up the past by centring on spiked comments made by current EMAP Editor Richard Leadbetter, when I deliver with vigour a quote from the outstanding aforementioned journo taken from a previous UK periodical. "Rampant stupidity is rife the world over. I won't rest until such fools are unmasked... and eliminated." Bear the scars of that, Steve. LEE

Worst sprites in any game, eh? Presumably you've never played Dark Castle on the Megadrive? I stand by my words: Saturn Doom truly is an abomination and yes I would rather play Alien Trilogy. Additionally, why don't you get a subscription so you can take part in more... contemporary debates? RICH

BOOK WINNER



MOTHER PLAYS GAMES SENSATION!

DEAR SSM

It's really good to hear that Quake is finally coming to the Saturn and me and my other Saturn owning mates can't wait to get hold of a copy. However, wouldn't it be extremely nice for a change if Sega got their cheque books out and bought the rights to it? Or even an injunction to stop all those PlayStation perverts from having a version. I'm sure this game would make the Saturn even more desirable and give Sega the chance to actually flog a few units and also make a few customers happy. Sony do it all the time, so why can't Sega?

I couldn't find Sega's address so I thought I'd hassle you lot instead. All I want to say is "We want King of Fighters '96!!!" Preferably the cart/CD combination at a reasonable price. And if Sega want proof that us Europeans are worthy of such a game I can get a list of at least ten names from my Saturn owning mates. Actually that includes me mum 'cos she's playing Exhumed at the minute. And that's just the start!! So let's see some action Sega!

Matthew, Durham

I'm willing to bet every last penny of Rich's bank account that the Saturn versions of Quake and Duke Nukem 3D are going to be superior to the PlayStation versions. After all, they're being programmed by the people responsible for the amazing Exhumed. Likewise both of these games will be available on the Saturn some time before the PS versions arrive. As for your second point, KoF 95 CD/cart pack will be available soon (check out the review this very issue). No doubt Sega are waiting to gauge the success of this before releasing KoF '96, but hopefully it shouldn't be too long. LEE

Williams are allegedly doing PS Quake, but they only seem to want to talk about Quake 64, which has got me thinking whether they're doing it at all. Besides, the fact that Quake will appear on Saturn first and the fact that it will be such a monumental technical achievement is much better than locking out all those "PlayStation perverts". Besides I own a PlayStation and I'm not that much of a pervert. True I haven't actually powered it up since I finished WipEout 2097, but regardless... RICH

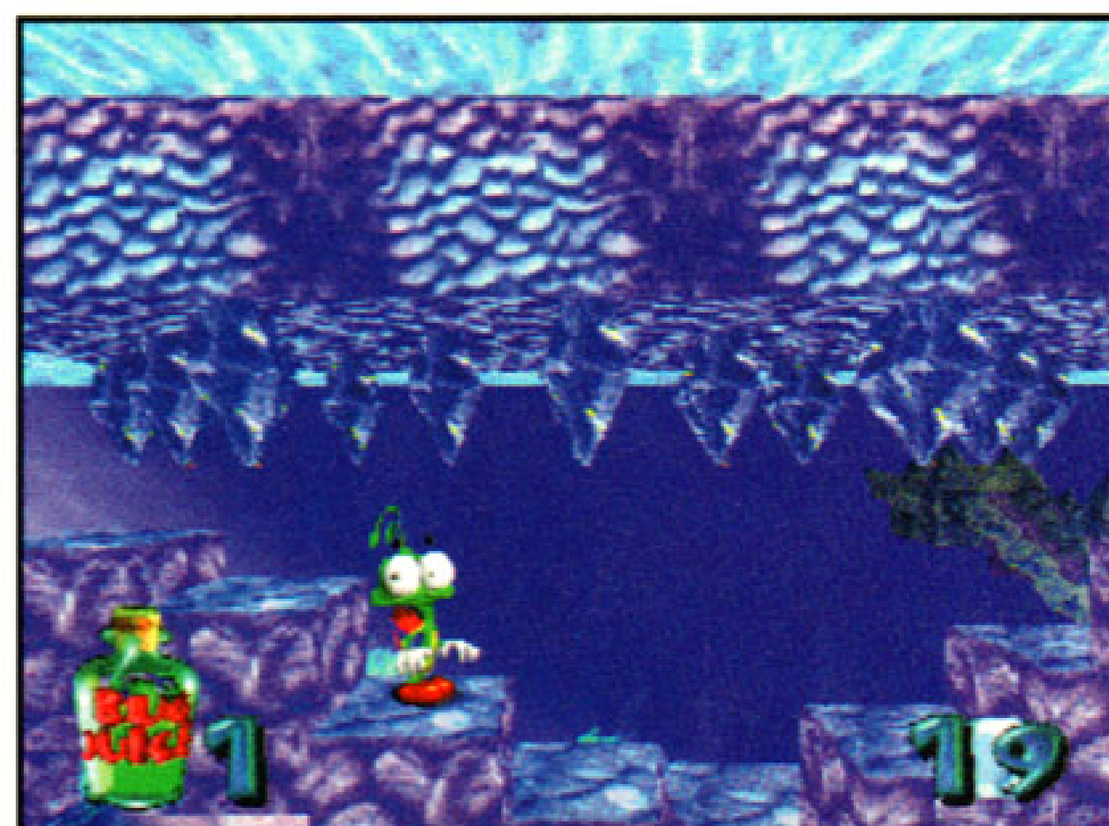
GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT!

DEAR SSM

I am not going to say that your mag is cool and you do such a great job 'cos you don't. I recently read in your mag that Bug Too! was set for a January release so I went to my local Game store and they explained that it was to be released in April. I also read on the Swagman review that it was set for an April release but when I rang Game to ask what date they said it was set for a summer release. Please get your facts straight in the future!

Tom Foster

It's a well known fact that release dates of games are notoriously unreliable as they inevitably slip back for reasons unknown to us. However, they are completely accurate at the time of writing and it is not our intention to deceive readers in any way. For a more detailed account of why specific games are slipping back why not ring up the software company in question instead of getting all worked up and hassling us? LEE



Bug Too! It's out now but that's not enough to soothe the savage brow of Tom Foster.

THE SATURN 32X EMULATOR

DEAR SSM

Why doesn't Sega (or a third party) produce a cartridge adapter so that Megadrive and 32X carts fit into the Saturn and produce a CD that instructs the Saturn to act as either of these machines? I don't know if it's possible but I'd purchase one forthwith. I think. If they were cheap that is.

Michael Tiernon, Newcastle

If such a device were at all possible, I'm sure that someone would have made one by now. Besides, the cream of the retro games crop always tend to emerge on the Saturn anyway, such as the excellent Sega Ages package and the fantastic forthcoming Sonic Jam so forget your extra plastic add-on bits. The Saturn's got it all! LEE

SATURN 64: FACT OR FICTION?

DEAR SSM

I and many of my friends want to get something clear so please can you help us out. In Issue 11 I wrote to you asking about the possibility of a Saturn 64 and back then you said 'No". Since then there have been many reports especially one about DVD making a Saturn 64 coming from all over the place. Then in other magazines of PlayStation and Nintendo 64 they say the Saturn will be dead by the end of the year and you say it won't. I know the Saturn has ages left yet but is there any truth in the 64-bit rumours or will there ever be one. Don't get me wrong, I think the Saturn is a brilliant machine with the likes of VF3, Street Fighter vs X-Men, Resident Evil and Marvel Super Heroes on the way. The Saturn will be the greatest console of the year, but will Sega ever match the power of the Nintendo?

Kirrana Tamang, London

We're not in the habit of printing rumours that are bandied about other publications as if they were fact. However, it would be a safe bet to say that Sega, Sony and even Nintendo are looking towards producing a new console to keep up with rapidly advancing technology. As to the Saturn being dead by the end of the year, this is purely a scare tactic to discourage people from buying a Saturn. Compared with Sega's awesome software line-up this year (check out this month's news pages for starters) Sony look set to have their weakest year thus far and similarly with Nintendo experiencing a severe software drought. LEE



Did you know that Dural was the codename for the next Sega machine and not just the VF boss character?

S&M SPECIALIST WRITES...

DEAR SSM

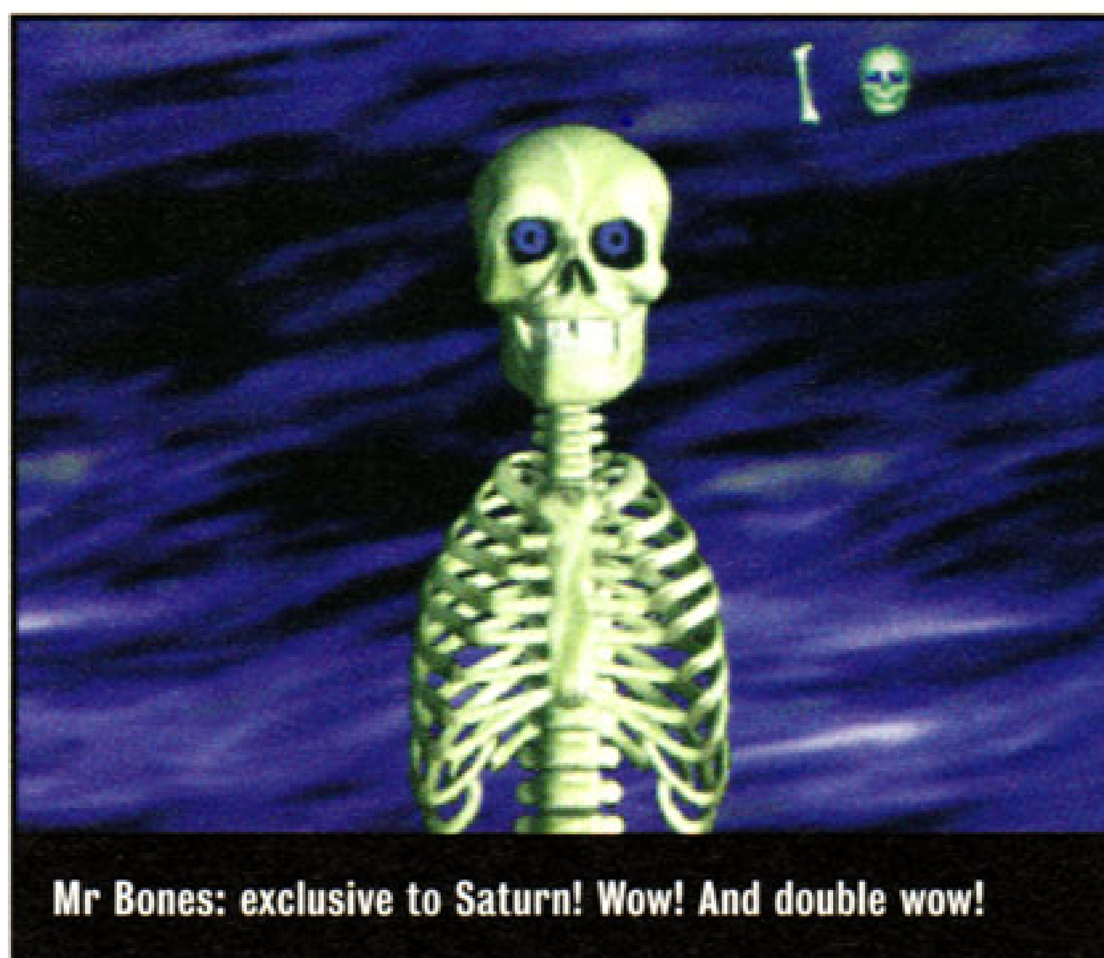
Last August I was saving up for a Nintendo 64 and I was continually slagging off the Saturn. Oh dear. Then I played it and played it and played it. Eventually my friend had to tie me up with dressing gown cords to keep me off Guardian Heroes but he could not restrain me. Yes, I was addicted. After burning my way through several Nintendo magazines I scrapped my plans for a N64. Christmas Day came and my Saturn arrived. Surely you say this letter is a bit late. This is due to me not being able to get off the Saturn until last night when my friend came round and prised me off with a crowbar.

Could you please tell Sega to issue a health warning on their games so that I can have a good night's sleep.

James Baker, Brighton

PS Is Red Alert coming to the Saturn?

I sympathise with your friend, as I often have to tie my girlfriend up with dressing gown cords when she's playing with my equipment, which also prevents me from having a good night's sleep. As for Red Alert... well, no news yet we're afraid. LEE



Mr Bones: exclusive to Saturn! Wow! And double wow!

WWF-OFF!

DEAR SSM

What the hell was Alex Gladwin going on about when he said WWF wasn't outdated and the PlayStation is better than the Saturn. I think he's talking out of his arse.

First of all why are you buying and writing into SSM if you have a PlayStation and think that it's better than the Saturn? Hmm... very strange.

WWF is as outdated as tank tops. How old are you anyway, by the look of your letter I'd say about sixteen and when WWF wasn't outdated it mainly attracted kids of about 10-12. I think I'd better tell you that the wrestlers aren't really hitting each other and it's just pretend. I would rather see a Polaroid of Richard Leadbetter naked than fat, hairy, sweaty men running about in leotards.

I'm also annoyed with what Alex Charles and David Metcalf wrote about Nights and Christmas Nights being crap. Well I think 99.9% of the people that have played NiGHTS would disagree with you. They also said when would Sega get their act together because when you look at your Out Now section most of the games are rubbish. I'd have to agree with you on that. I mean there's only over thirty games with 90% and over and 20 games with 80% or over. Who wants 50 excellent Saturn games when you can have five good PlayStation titles or three good N64 games?

John Merneaf, Lancashire

We've received quite a disturbing number of requests begging, no pleading for the nude photos of Rich to be published. However our bashful Editor insists that as long as he's at the helm of the good ship SSM that no such freak show will arise. However, he's about to bugger off to the other side of the pond for a holiday so keep your eyes peeled for our very next issue. No promises mind. LEE

BRIEFLY...

DEAR SSM

I have been a loyal Sega fan for many years now but feel disillusioned with Sega and their powerhouse console, the Saturn. Why is it that third party support is declining? Shinny Entertainment are no longer bringing out Wild Nines and Bullfrog are no longer committed to the platform. Am I right to feel disillusioned with the current Saturn scene?

Paul Casson, Kent

In a word, "no". It is true that some third party developers have withdrawn their support, but what we're left with is quality over quantity, the complete opposite to the dilemma Sony are faced with. The astounding Duke Nukem 3D, Quake, Fighting Force, Tomb Raider 2, Marvel Super Heroes, X-Men vs Street Fighter, Grandia and loads of SNK stuff shows the awesome quality of third party titles to be released this year, all of them Saturn firsts. LEE

DEAR SSM

Why has Sega not got around to releasing a link cable yet? I own Sega Rally and was most disappointed to learn there was no link-up option. The split-screen mode is good but a little confusing. Now if it was full screen it could have been less confusing, more detailed and probably a bit faster. I think this is the reason Sony's machine sold well was because they had a link-cable available straight from its release.

Chris Johnson, Lincs

The link-up cable hasn't been released for two reasons. Firstly there's not enough games with link-up capabilities to justify its release. Secondly you need to have two televisions, two Saturns, two copies of the game and the link-up cable to be able to play in link-up mode. Whilst this may be great for games mags like ours, it's largely unpractical for your average Saturn owner. Sony themselves have realised this and have now dropped the link-up cable for the PlayStation and are actively encouraging developers NOT to use it in the future. Intriguing. LEE

DEAR SSM

I am writing to you to talk about VF3 and the accelerator cartridge. When people buy games they want the best quality and when I was reading Issue 15 you said that VF3 would need an accelerator cartridge to cope with the power of the game. So what I'd like to know is whether this is true, how much will it be and when will VF3 come out.

Simon Bardwell, Ipswich

As I've already said at some length to the innumerable amount of callers who see fit to interrupt our busy work schedule, there's no official word on whether the accelerator cartridge even exists. Therefore to tell you any specifications, price or release dates would be pure speculation. However, if it's rumours you're after, just buy Saturn Power. He, he. LEE

Q&A

Another month, another super-exciting edition of Q+A. Actually, I have to admit that your questions were a lot more interesting this month. However, I've still got missives from the last Q+A to help me should I have any more problems sleeping. Here we go then: more hardcore responses from the Master, Richard Leadbetter, and Sega Europe Overfiend Mark Maslowicz. Send your questions (be interesting) to INSOMNIA-CURING Q+A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, London E14 9TZ. Get scribbling!

PAY MORE ATTENTION

Dear SSM

Since your magazine is the best in the world, I was hoping you could answer a few questions.

1. I've got SWWS '97, Virtua Cop 2, Sega Rally, Daytona USA, VF2 and FIFA '97 for my Saturn. What should I get next?
2. When is SWWS '98 coming out?
3. Any chance of some SWWS '97 cheats?
4. I've saved up £70 so do you think I should get the Virtua Gun or a new game?
5. What's best out of Die Hard Arcade and Die Hard Trilogy?
6. Who do you think is the best fighter in VF2?

Karl Skott, Huntingdon.



1. You should really have Exhumed and NiGHTS in your collection to be honest. 2. October. 3. We've printed them already. Twice. 4. You should have a gun. And NiGHTS and the analogue controller. 5. DHA is cooler technically, but DHT has more lastability. 6. Akira by a huge margin, although he is difficult to master. Unless you ARE the Master!

DIE HARD TRILOGY FETISHIST

Dear Q+A

I get your mag every week (so you buy the same issue four times? Rich) and think it is wicked. Please print my letter as I would love to see it in a mag like yours.

1. Which is best, the Sega Virtua Gun or the Predator Light Gun?
2. I am looking at Die Hard Trilogy for my next purchase. Is it true it is three games on one disc? Can you play it without a gun?
3. Is there a library where you can borrow Saturn games?
4. I get £32 a week and I will get £30 a week from October onwards. I have these games: WipEout, Sega Rally, VF2, Manx TT, Tomb Raider, Hardcore 4x4. What should I get after Die Hard?
5. Have you played Tomb Raider 2 and is it any good?
6. Which will be best, VF3 or Fighters MegaMix? Having VF2 which would you advise me to get?
7. Is it true you're doing demo discs with every issue from now on?

Matt Thompson, West Sussex.



1. I'd personally stick with the Virtua Gun. 2. You obviously didn't read the review. But in answer to your questions, yes it has three different gameplay types and yes you can play it with a gun. 3. It's called Blockbuster Video. 4. You should get Exhumed, NiGHTS, Virtua Cop, Virtua Cop 2, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Fighters MegaMix and Sega WorldWide Soccer '97 BEFORE you go anywhere near Die Hard Trilogy. 5. No. Can't tell yet. 6. I refuse to compare a game that's out to one that no-one has seen outside of AM2. 7. We will do demo discs when we have quality ones to put on the cover.

ANY MORE NEWS?

Dear SSM

I've been reading your mag since it came out so I thought it was time to write in. Please could you answer my questions? Please!

1. Should I swap VF2 for Fighters MegaMix?
2. Will House of the Dead come out for Saturn?
3. Any more news on Resident Evil?
4. Which is better in terms of lastability, Theme Park or Mass Destruction?
5. What on Earth is Virtual Hydlide as I saw it for £10 and was thinking of buying it?
6. Will Micro Machines V3 come to Saturn?

Lloyd Savickas, Bristol



1. No. But you should have BOTH in your collection. 2. It's a distinct possibility, but no plans have been mentioned yet. 3. If there is, it'll be in the mag. Should be before Christmas though. 4. I refuse to compare two totally different games. It's pointless. 5. It's a boring RPG, not really worth £10. Save your cash for Shining the Holy Ark. 6. Yes, at the end of the summer hopefully.



Quake, Quake, Quake! Yep, it's gonna be a Saturn exclusive.

OH DEAR

Dear SSM,

I am considering selling my Sega Saturn and getting a PlayStation because Saturn doesn't bring out enough games and when they do they aren't half as good as the PlayStation ones. All my mates at school say PlayStation is better and can handle a lot more graphical effects. Please help me!

Tony Campion, Burnley



Point one: there are less games for the Saturn but they are generally of a higher quality. Point two: the most exciting games come to Saturn first: Exhumed, Tomb Raider, Quake, Duke Nukem 3D and loads more. Point three: many Saturn versions are superior to the PS ones like Street Fighter Alpha (and Alpha 2), Exhumed, Hexen, Night Warriors... and plenty more! Point four: the best coin-ops in the world come from Sega and they're all SATURN EXCLUSIVE! Point five: yes, generally PlayStation games have flashier visuals, but there has never been a graphical effect on PS that has not been done on the Saturn. FACT. Besides, gameplay is more important. If you want the best games, stick with the Saturn.

WHEN THE HELL?!?

Dear SSM

Your mag is totally cool and this is the first time I've written so please answer my questions.

1. When the hell is that wonderful game Scud Race coming to Saturn?
2. Will the Saturn version of Last Bronx be as good as it looks in your Sega Flash CD?
3. Any decent platformers coming out soon?

Adam Lee, Leeds

1. There has been no announcement from AM2... yet. 2. Yes and expect some huge surprises with that game. 3. The new Sonic game will amaze you. In the meantime try out Pandemonium. It's cool.

FAQ

The questions that come up time and time again are answered in this lickle section of Q+A. For the fastest answers, come here FIRST!

1. Which is better, Quake or Duke Nukem 3D?



Well how can we compare one unfinished game to another? If it's any help, both titles are sufficiently different to warrant purchase. They will both be awesome but at this stage it's impossible to recommend one over the other.

2. Is it worth getting FIFA '97?



Most people seem attracted to FIFA because of the fact that the Premiership teams are in there. Look, the game is barely average and WorldWide is far, far superior. WorldWide '98, due in October, will have Premiership teams and will be ACE!

3. Will there be a Virtua Cop 3?



AM2 rarely divulge any of their plans. However, the leak that told us about Scud Race about 18 months ago did mention a Cop 3. Similarly, it's unlikely that AM2 would bring an end to one of their most successful franchises.

4. Any news on the VF3 upgrade?



No. When we know anything, we'll put it in the news section. Not Q+A.

A blast from the past!



As you may have gathered from last issue's exclusive news story, and this month's awesome front cover, Sonic's back in the first of two new titles guaranteed to blow Saturn owners away. LEE NUTTER dons little red booties and dashes off to pay homage to that spiky blue hero of yesteryear, Sonic The Hedgehog!





If Sonic World is any indication of things to come, then readers are fully justified in wetting their pants.

The Sonic Team has produced some of the finest video games the world has ever seen. Cases in point: Sonic the Hedgehog, which sold over 14 million copies worldwide, and the utterly incredible NiGHTS. The latter surpassed all previous expectations of Sonic Team, being hailed as one of the most visually splendid and cunningly crafted video games of all time. However as good as NiGHTS was, legions of Sonic fanatics around the globe have grown restless waiting for their speedy hero to appear on Saturn. Sonic 3D Blast was merely an upgraded 16-bit stopgap and was never even released in Japan. So upon completion of NiGHTS Sonic Team began work on what has since become known as Project Sonic. Now to quash any rumours you may have read elsewhere, Project Sonic is not the name of the new 32-bit Sonic title to be released later in the year. Instead the mysterious title is actually Sega of Japan's new initiative to reintroduce Sonic to the gaming community. Many Saturn owners may have missed out on the Sonic phenomenon the first time around as they were too old, too young or out sniffing glue or something. So phase one of Sega's two-pronged attack on the gaming public is the imminent release of Sonic Jam.

Essentially a compilation disc featuring the MegaDrive hits Sonic the Hedgehog 1-3 and Sonic and Knuckles, Sonic Jam is intended to kickstart the Sonic licence which has been languishing in gaming limbo for the past few years. As great as this is, the main focus has not been on the classic 16-bit games but on the all-new front end entitled Sonic World. Acting as an interactive manual with graphics rivalling those of Mario 64 this is possibly the best indication of what to expect from phase two of Project Sonic later this year (THE big Sonic title). In the meantime, we have one of the few copies of Sonic Jam outside of Japan and are now about to exclusively reveal it in all its splendour.









Left: The bridge demonstrates some awesome 3D texture-mapped visuals as well as the excellent transparent river.



The awesome virtual camera pan around Sonic giving players an amazing view of this fully 3D environment.

SONIC WORLD

The big news concerning Sonic Jam, and the reason we've dedicated so much space to what is basically a retro collection, is the welcome addition of Sonic World. Basically a 3D polygon rendition of the Green Hill Zone, Sonic World is an interactive environment where Sonic can explore buildings to gain information about anything and everything to do with Sonic as well as complete challenging tasks. This feature was used to similar effect in Namco's recent Museum series but not to the same jaw-dropping standard as Sonic World. Anyway, we'll get to all the cool features later, first let's take a look at those stunning visuals.

Put simply we've never seen anything quite as breathtaking on the Saturn as Sonic World, which certainly bodes well for the future Sonic title. We've always advocated that the Saturn has untapped power and at last we can begin to see that come to fruition. The luscious 3D polygon environment is comparable in size to one of the initial levels from Mario 64 but looks more impressive due to superior texture mapping and object placement. The environment is densely populated with trees, buildings, rivers, bridges, platforms, golden rings and basically everything you'd expect to find in a Sonic game (except for Badniks). The river is particularly impressive as it emerges from the bottom of a waterfall, demonstrating true transparent rippling water effects, something curiously absent from the Saturn version of Tomb Raider.



All of this 3D loveliness is viewed from a floating 'virtual camera' which bobs, pans and dramatically zooms around Sonic, providing a perfect view regardless of the spiky one's location. By using the shoulder buttons, players can rotate the camera around Sonic which proves handy for spotting certain hard to reach items and platforms. To top it all off, there's no clipping whatsoever, hardly any glitching and it all runs at a super-smooth 30 frames per second. To be honest, as pretty as the screen shots look, they really fail to convey the true beauty of the game. It has to be seen to be believed. It's that good.

SO WHAT'S THE IDEA?

Sonic World itself is a kind of interactive museum of all things Sonic. Scattered about the awesome 3D world are various buildings containing a treasure trove of goodies to mess about with. There's absolutely tons of stuff to play with ranging from the original Sonic tunes and character sketches to the more bizarre Japanese television commercials and worldwide game release information. There are cartoons, rendered intros, packaging artwork and everything even the most dedicated Sonic fanatic would want to know about their idol. In addition a range of cheats for the 16-bit Sonic games are hidden within Sonic World for players to discover, giving access to de-bug modes, level selects and more.





One of the latter tasks requires players to locate and burst three huge balloons. Can you find them all?



Clipping? No way! Glitching? Nope! Is there no end to Sonic World's brilliance?





Bet you never thought you'd get to see true transparent rippling water effects on the Saturn, did you? Oh ye of little faith.





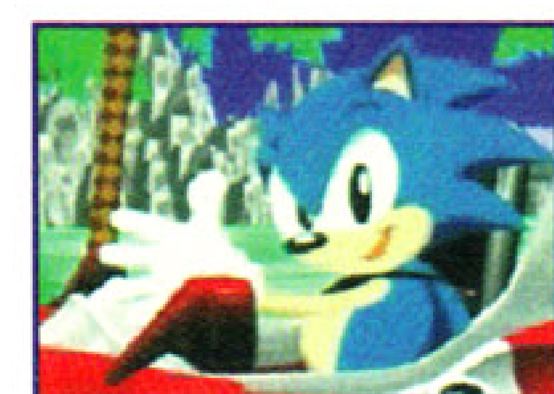
The ending from the Sonic CD game is an awesome anime-style cartoon featuring a triumphant Sonic and his pal Tails.

MOVIE THEATRE

By far the most impressive of the museums to visit, the Movie Theatre features reels of high quality FMV movies to watch. In fact, there's so much footage crammed into this mini cinema it makes us wonder how the hell they managed to fit it all onto one disc! To begin with visitors to the movie theatre are able to view the opening and ending anime-style movies to Sonic CD, accompanied by the cheesy tunes of "Sonic Warrior" and "Believe In Yourself". Judging by the unpopularity of the Mega CD it's fair to say that most Saturn owners won't have seen these cartoons before so they definitely make a welcome addition to the pack. Alas, the full Sonic CD game isn't included.

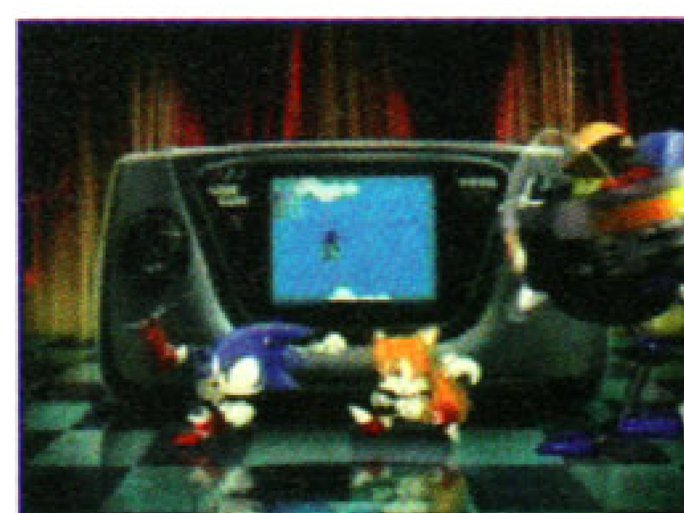
Following on from that are a couple of cartoons featuring Sonic battling it out with Dr Robotnik which concludes with the mysterious message: "To Be Continued..." Make of that what you will. Other cool stuff in the movie theatre include an excellent first person perspective view of Sonic tearing round a CG rendition of the Green Hill Zone, destroying Badniks and shedding his rings along the way. Perhaps the most entertaining of all the movies however are the bizarre series of Japanese television commercials produced to promote the Sonic games. The Sonic 3 commercial still reduces the SSM team to fits of uncontrollable laughter as various members of the Japanese public are possessed by Sonic and end up running around the streets of Tokyo Sonic-style. Also included are commercials for some of the Game Gear Sonic titles, Sonic CD, Sonic 2 and a whole host of others.





Footage from the Sonic Drift commercial sees Sonic speeding around a racing track with his woodland chums giving chase.







Above left: Yep, even the Game Gear Sonic commercials are in here. **Right:** Sonic loses his rings after an encounter with a Badnik in the CG version of the Green Hill Zone.

HALL OF FAME

Visit the Hall of Fame and players may leaf through a massive catalogue of Sonic games with their respective worldwide release dates around the world and a wealth of other important Sonic facts. From the original conception of Sonic the Hedgehog in April 1990, through the Sega/Cherry Coke Tour in 1993 to the recent release of the Sonic and Knuckles Collection on the PC. In fact, just about every single Sonic game and related event ever is to be found in here!





ART GALLERY

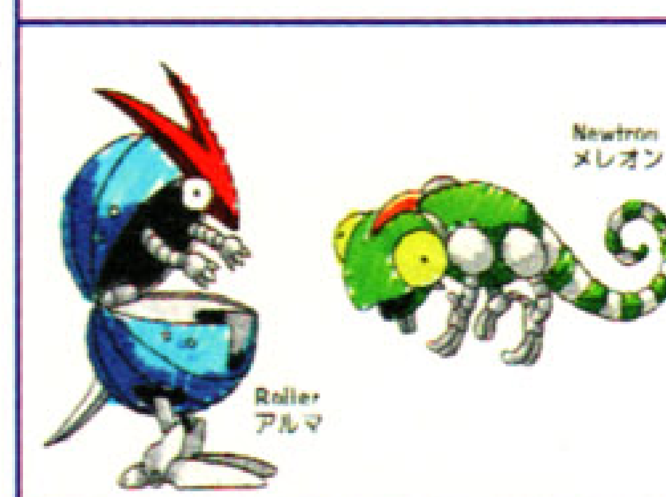
As the name suggests, the Art Gallery is a collection of images featuring the world's number one spiky blue hedgehog in a variety of degrading and image tarnishing poses. From Sonic doing the shopping to Sonic on the ski slopes, there are a wealth of high resolution pictures to flick through. In addition a range of artwork featuring Miles "Tails" Prower and Sonic's other woodland chums has been included for your viewing pleasure.

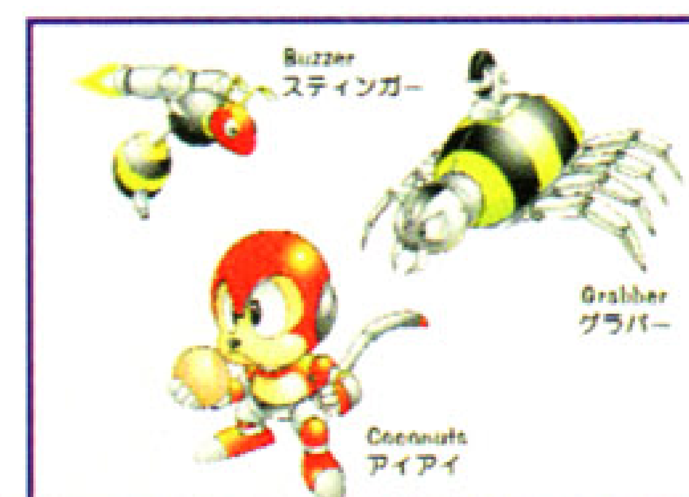




CHARACTER HOUSE

The Character House is quite similar to the Art Gallery as it features some of the original sketches and other pieces of artwork featuring Dr Robotnik and his menacing Badnik creations. Every single Badnik from each of the four MegaDrive Sonic games is included in this museum in one form or another. From the pesky Caterkillers of the original Sonic the Hedgehog to the havoc-wreaking Mushmeanies of Sonic and Knuckles, they're all in there for you to peruse at your leisure. Add to this a zoom feature allowing players to view all the artwork up close and what you have is a comprehensive gallery of all Sonic's diabolical opponents.









The springs from the classic 16-bit games make an appearence in Sonic World, allowing Sonic to reach some of the more difficult to reach rings.



MUSIC SHOP

At the time of writing, the Music Shop was the only one of the museum buildings not to have been completed, though what's inside is obviously fairly self-explanatory. However, those expecting an on-line music shopping facility will be heartily disappointed. Already in place is a comprehensive menu of Sonic tunes from the various games included in the pack, as well as the theme tune from the brand new Sonic World. With a kind of cheery Hawaiian steel drum feel to it, this theme tune is irritatingly catchy. Rest assured all the cheeky Sonic tunes we've grown to love over the years will make their way into the finished version.





THE HOLY GRAIL?

Sonic World isn't just a museum though as Sonic Team have thought to include a challenge mode whereby players are faced with a number of difficult tasks to complete within a set time limit. Begin by collecting a simple 20 rings in the space of a minute before progressing to more difficult tasks requiring players to burst balloons, find lamp-posts and even touch Tails (no cheeky comments now). If players manage to successfully complete all the tasks within the set time limit they are rewarded with a secret of some description, though what that is at this point in time is unclear. Rest assured it will be well worth the effort it takes to complete these testing goals.





CONTROL FREAKS

As you might expect from the Sonic Team, Sonic World is fully compatible with the analogue pad. Well they invented the damn thing so what do you expect? Just as the analogue pad is an essential piece of equipment to get the most out of NiGHTS, so it is with Sonic World. With the analogue pad, Sonic's movement is incredibly smooth, fluid and accurate, making tight turns and seemingly impossible challenges a tad easier to complete. Without the pad, Sonic is more tricky to control, especially when circling objects as he tends to turn in short, 90 degree bursts. So then, yet another reason to buy the analogue pad and NiGHTS pack right now.



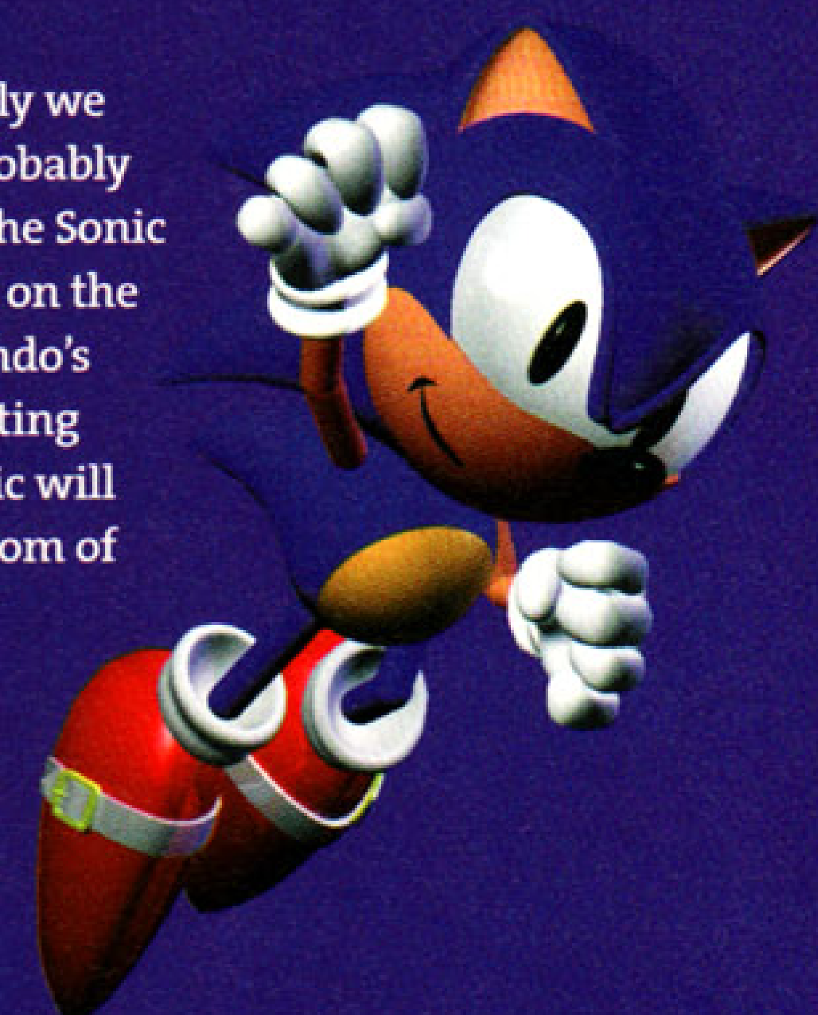


The analogue pad makes Sonic World even more enjoyable.

PHASE TWO?

So what of Phase Two of Project Sonic you ask? Well, obviously we can only speculate at this point in time but Sonic World is probably the clearest indication of things to come. A full game using the Sonic World engine would undoubtedly be one of the hottest titles on the Saturn to date, rivalling the heady heights reached by Nintendo's mascot. However my overactive Spider Sense is tingling, alerting me to the fact that it's unlikely that phase two of Project Sonic will be a blatant Mario 64 rip-off. To allow Sonic the virtual freedom of movement evident in Mario 64, there would certainly be a trade-off with speed, and after all, Sonic is all about speed. Throwing yet more confusion on the subject, rumours are now abound that phase two will take the form of a racing game, possibly along the lines of Mario Kart! What is certain is that with the Sonic Team and Mr Yuji Naka himself at the helm, Phase Two will definitely blow you away.

Phase two is scheduled to make an appearance at E3 in Atlanta in June and as ever, our very own Richard Leadbetter will be there to get all the latest on what is possibly this year's most anticipated Saturn title. So as long as he doesn't do his usual trick of consuming copious amounts of shandy, a full report on Phase Two of Project Sonic and the rest of Sega's awesome E3 line-up is guaranteed in the very next issue!









Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Sonic curling up in a ball and descending towards the ground at rapid velocity, collecting rings along the way.





Wow! The opening title screen from the very first Sonic the Hedgehog game. Sigh... fond memories.

LOCK-ON, TUNE IN AND DROP OUT!

Casting aside all the 3D loveliness of Sonic World, the crux of Sonic Jam are the four MegaDrive hits Sonic the Hedgehog 1-3 and Sonic and Knuckles appearing on one disc in pixel perfect form. Sonic purists will be elated to know that each game has been left in it's original state so that they all play, look and sound exactly like the 16-bit classics we all fondly remember. However, for those of you who want a little bit more than a simple port over, several gameplay enhancements have been added which are turned on or off at the players discretion. For example, Sonic can now perform his trademark Spin Dash in Sonic 1, a Time Attack option has been included to allow the player to race through every stage and special stages may be tackled without having to play through the main game proper.

Perhaps the most exciting news however, is that the "Lock-On System" of Sonic and Knuckles, which was backwardly compatible with previous games, has been retained allowing for stunning new gameplay variations when two Sonic cartridges are combined together!





Left: With the new time trial option, players fly through levels and rack up the best possible times. Right: The end-of-level boss, as always, is Dr Robotnik in yet another murderous mechanical masterpiece. Run Sonic, run!







SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

For many people, myself included, Sonic The Hedgehog was the main reason for buying a MegaDrive and Sega are obviously hoping to repeat the success of the original games with the new Sonic Saturn title due later this year. The game itself combined simple gameplay with awesome speed, some cool tunes and vibrant and colourful graphics to produce a landmark title in the annals of video gaming history. The very same winning formula was to be repeated a few years later by the Sonic Team with their awesome new creation, the dreamlike NiGHTS.

The basic premise of Sonic the Hedgehog and its many sequels, is that the planet of Moebius is under attack from the evil Dr Robotnik and his Badnik creations. This villainous scientist has encased Sonic's woodland chums in robotic casings and is sending them to the far ends of the planet to wreak havoc. As Sonic, it is your task to free your woodland chums by smashing their metallic prisons apart and defeating the mechanical boss at the end of each level. Along the way, golden rings are collected which allow Sonic to enter tricky bonus stages, successful completion of which result in our hero being rewarded with a much sought after Chaos Emerald. Six emeralds in all are required to finish the game properly with the final challenge arriving in the form of barmy old Dr Robotnik himself.

On its initial release, Sonic became an overnight success selling millions around the globe and prompting Sega to adopt him as their personal mascot. A sequel was inevitable and arrived a year or so after with the promise of rectifying the shortcomings of the original, namely the simple graphics and the shortness of the game. And it did just that.







The special stages in the first Sonic game was quite bland, with the flat 2D psychedelic backgrounds becoming most irritating after a while.





SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Anticipation for the sequel to the immensely popular Sonic The Hedgehog reached fever pitch by November '92 or "Sonic Tuesday" as it had been dubbed in the UK. The pressure on the Sonic Team to deliver a game that was superior to original was immense and they didn't disappoint. The graphics were much improved over the original with chunkier more detailed sprites and backgrounds and a more variety between levels. It wasn't the same sort of leap that was later made with Sonic 3 but this was a worthy addition to the Sonic series nevertheless. The gameplay was also a lot faster than the original and a damn sight tougher too, making Sonic 2 a more lasting experience than its predecessor.

Sonic himself benefited from the addition of a brand new Spin Dash attack which allowed him to attain full speed without a run-up, thereby evading any impending danger. He was also joined by one of his woodland chums, Miles "Tails" Prower, a flying fox no less who could be controlled by a second player to assist Sonic throughout the game.





A new special stage had also been added in place of the flat, rotating special stage from the first Sonic. The all-new special stage had Sonic running through a roller-coaster-like section of tubing, collecting rings and avoiding bombs until eventually collecting each of the seven Chaos Emeralds. The same stage was later revamped for the Saturn version of Sonic 3D Blast using a 3D polygon, light-sourced Sonic which looked even more impressive. It came as no surprise that this section was programmed by the Sonic Team themselves, whereas the rest of the game was programmed by Traveller's Tales. Sonic 2 proved to be a huge improvement over the original and was popular enough to warrant a further sequel, the imaginatively titled Sonic the Hedgehog 3.







Left: The special stages for the second Sonic outing are much improved, featuring an awesome 3D tunnel section later revamped for the recent Sonic 3D Blast!



One of the new power-ups, added to the third installment of the series, allows Sonic to turn himself into a fireball!



Sonic gathers pace on the awesome loop-the-loop.



The amount of graphical detail in Sonic 3 is astonishing.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3

Upon its release, Sonic 3 was heralded as the best game in the Sonic trilogy and it's easy to see why. The sequel used a whole new graphical engine which meant that the game's visuals were more polished than ever before with legions of Badniks and the largest levels witnessed in any Sonic game. These levels were incredibly varied and detailed with each Zone's scenery improving on previous outings with more colour, textures and settings. The level designs were also quite different to previous Sonic games, with each Zone benefiting from increased height as well as width. This greatly increased the scope for exploration, with multiple routes available, and made the third instalment less linear than previous efforts.

However, whilst Sega ensured that Sonic 3 looked amazing, they also managed to retain the playability of the first two games and even improved upon it. A wealth of bonus stages were added which pushed the boundaries of the MegaDrive's technology even further. The Chaos Zone special stage has Sonic running across the surface of a huge spherical planet collecting blue spheres and avoiding red spheres in order to be rewarded with a Chaos Emerald.





Sonic 3 also debuted another supporting character in the form of Knuckles the Echidna whom Sonic has to contend with whilst battling Dr Robotnik. New power-ups have been included which surround Sonic in an aura, each of which has different capabilities allowing him to breath underwater, walk through fire and act as a magnet for rings. The break-neck speeds of the previous two games have been retained and some of the most amazing set-pieces ever seen are in abundance throughout. Add to this the awesome two-player split-screen mode first seen in Sonic 2, which allowing two players to compete head-to-head in one of six different zones, and what you have is an incredible addition to the series. Simply put, Sonic 3 is a breathtaking game where there's never a dull moment and is only surpassed when combined with Sonic and Knuckles.



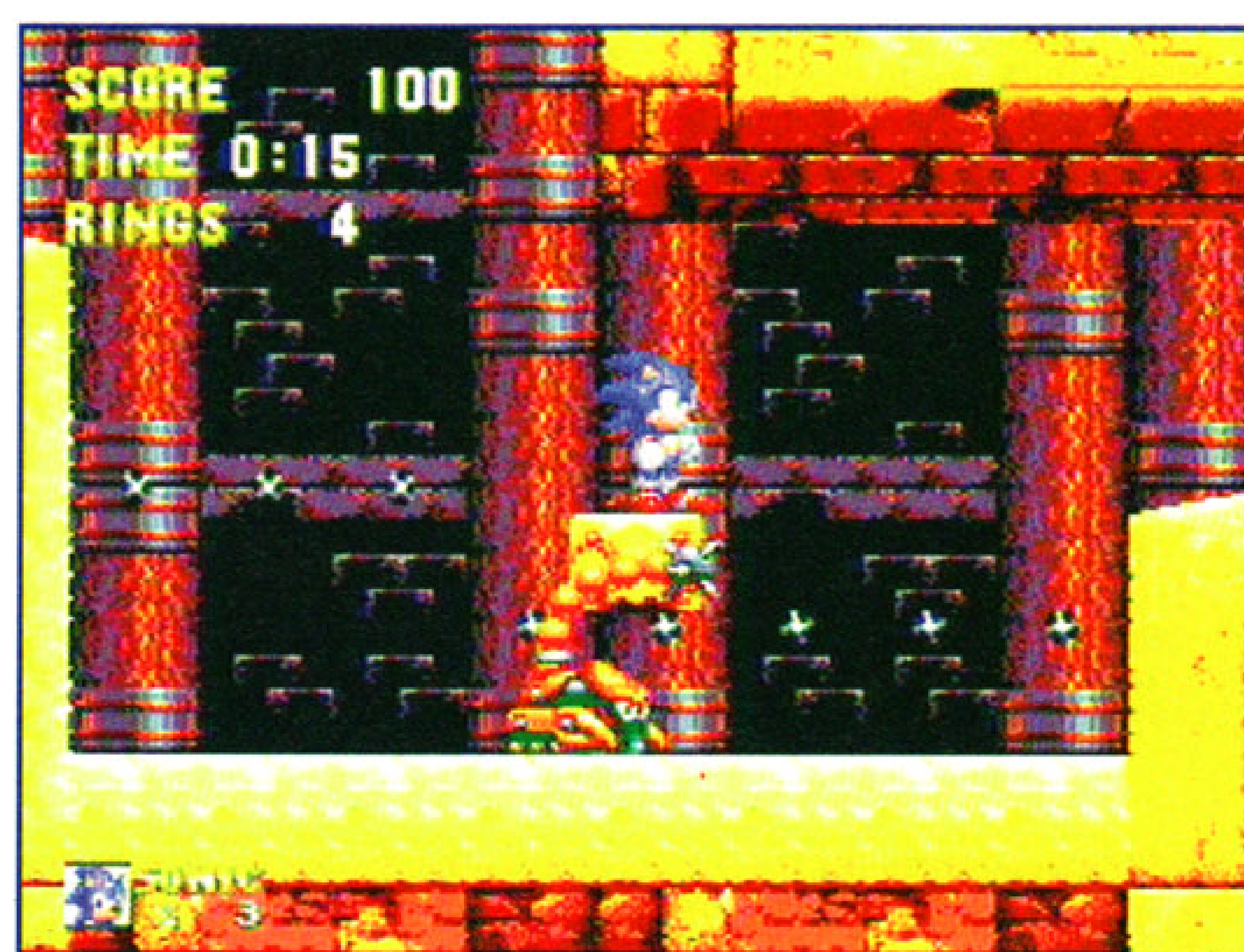
Collecting the extra lives which are hidden within the various levels becomes essential for players wishing to complete the game.

GET HYPER!

The Sonic series of games are certainly unique in that they cater for the varying degree of the players' gaming ability. Newcomers to the Sonic phenomenon are able to simply run through each of the levels in a time trial-like way and safely reach the exit. More experienced Sonic gamers are able to collect all the Chaos Emeralds and rings to finish the game properly. Whereas the most talented players will strive to become Super Sonic and then Hyper Sonic by collecting Chaos Emeralds and Super Chaos Emeralds!



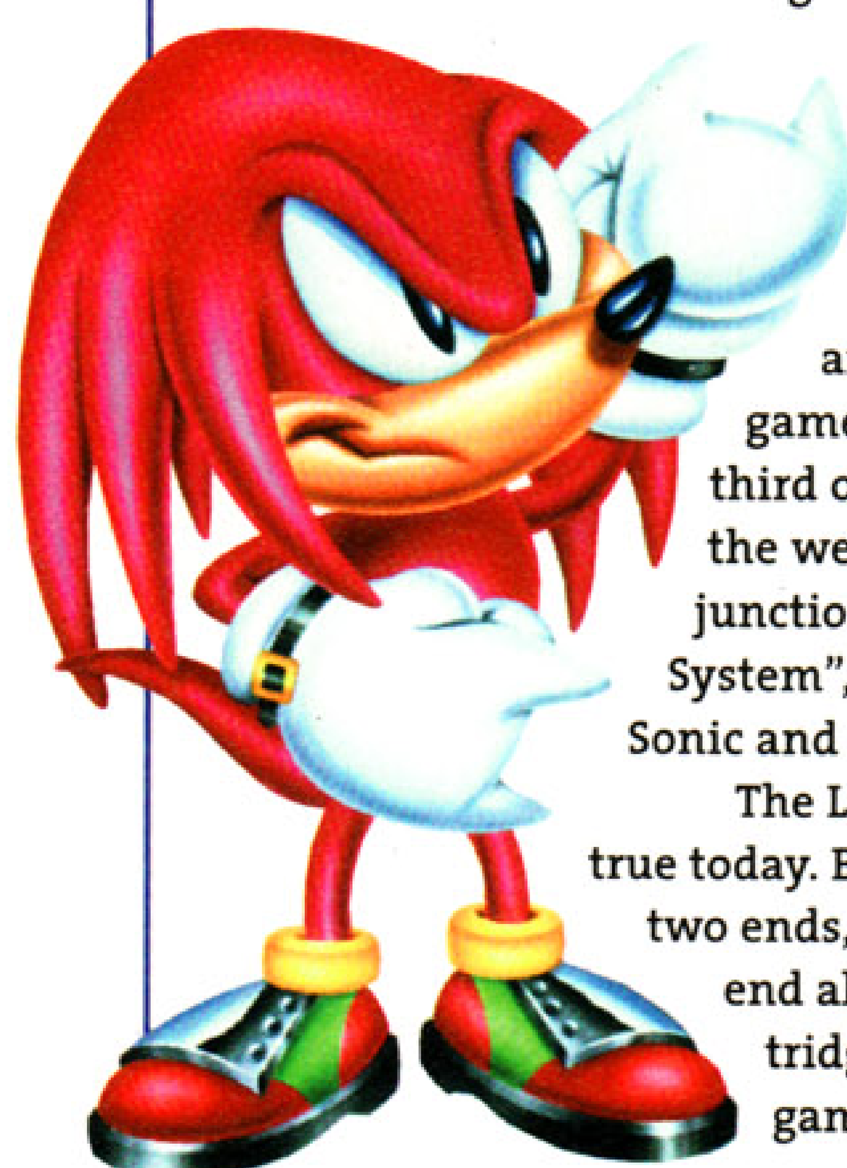




The Sandopolis zone features all manner of set pieces that would put other platformers to shame. From the moving stone slabs to the sand slides, the variety is amazing!

SONIC AND KNUCKLES

The fourth gripping instalment of the Sonic series saw the return of Knuckles the Echidna in a starring role alongside Sonic himself. The cause of much nuisance in Sonic 3 had now become a playable character, adding a whole new dimension to the usual Sonic gameplay through his increased variety of moves. Knuckles has the ability to glide, climb walls and smash through thicker walls and stone blocks allowing him to reach areas previously inaccessible to Sonic alone.



The game engine of Sonic and Knuckles is actually an evolution of the Sonic 3 engine which is apparent in the similarities between the two titles. A lot of the bosses and set-pieces were repeated from Sonic 3 and indeed the game pretty much looks like an enhanced version of Sonic's third outing. As a result Sonic and Knuckles alone is possibly the weakest of the Sonic series. That said, when used in conjunction with any of the previous Sonic games, via the "Lock-On System", whole new avenues are opened up and this is where Sonic and Knuckles really excels.

The Lock-On System was unique at the time and the same is true today. Basically the game arrived as a plug-through cartridge with two ends, one of which is slotted into the MegaDrive and the other end allows previous MD Sonic titles to be added. The two cartridges combined add a number of features to previous Sonic games and even creates all-new games as follows:







The addition of Knuckles the Echidna as a playable character allowed more scope for exploration than in other Sonic games, with his impressive range of extra moves. Knuckles later went on to star in his own game "Chaotix" on 32X.



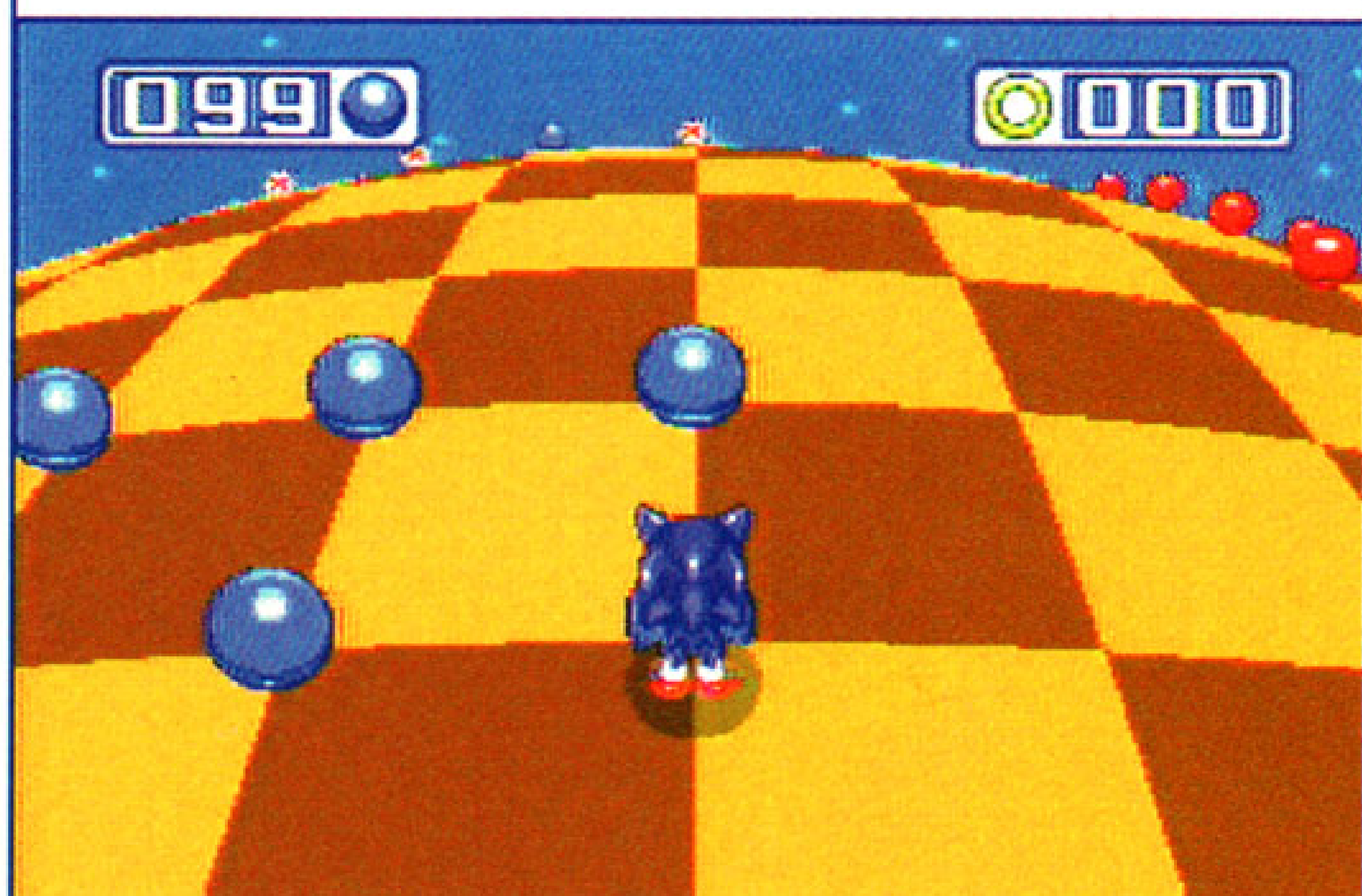


SONIC AND KNUCKLES WITH SONIC 1

"GET BLUE SPHERES!"

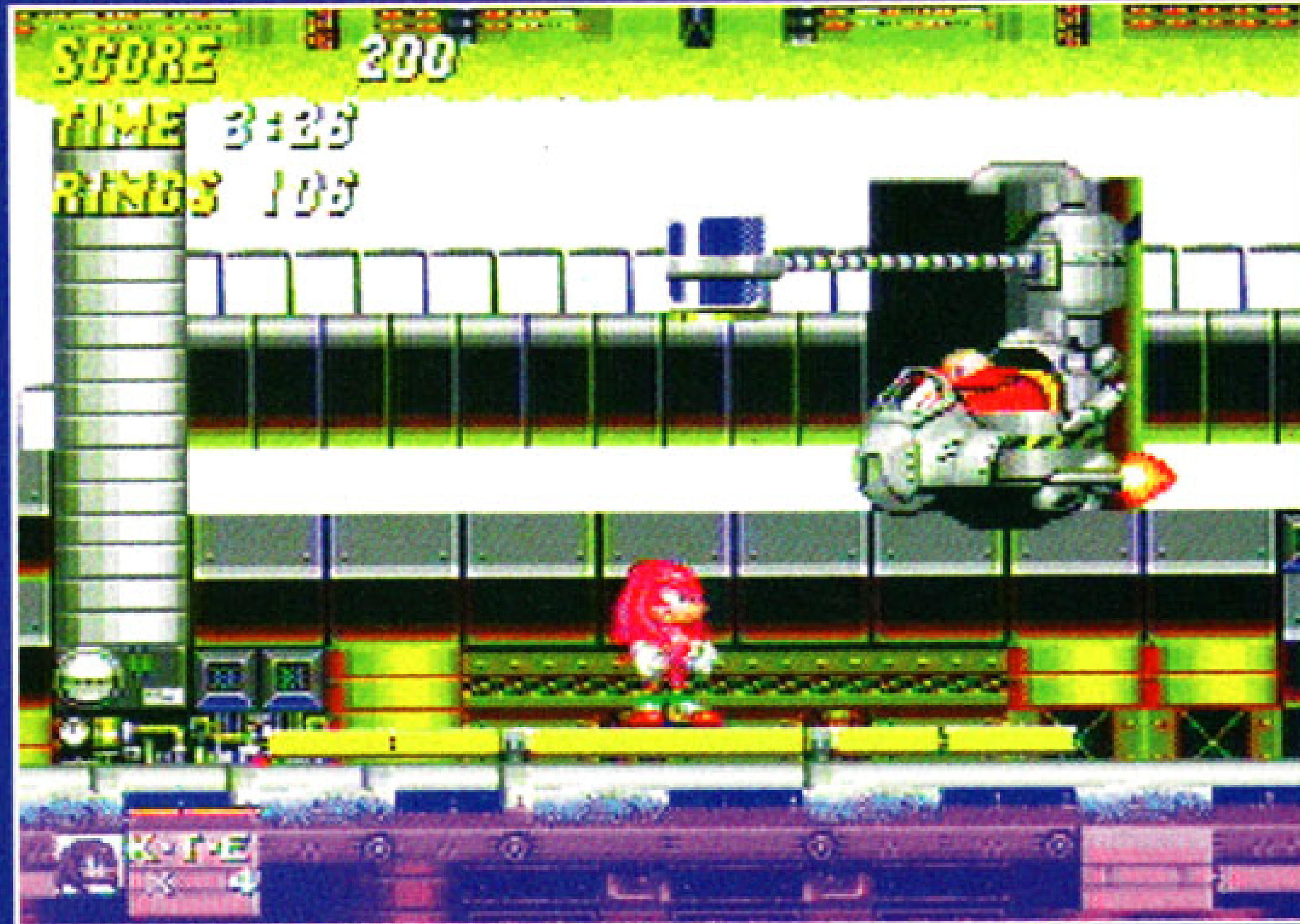
Add these two titles together and a whole new game is created from the special stage of Sonic 3. This is the ultimate test of a players wits and game playing skills as Sonic roams around the surface of a huge spherical planet collecting blue balls and dodging the red ones. With literally hundreds of thousands of levels to tackle, the Sonic 1/Sonic and Knuckles combo is an extremely lengthy and enjoyable game in its own right.





The "Get Blue Spheres!" game is incredibly fast and completely addictive.





Left: That's right folks! Your eyes do not deceive you. That's Knuckles the Echidna in Sonic 2! Awesome.

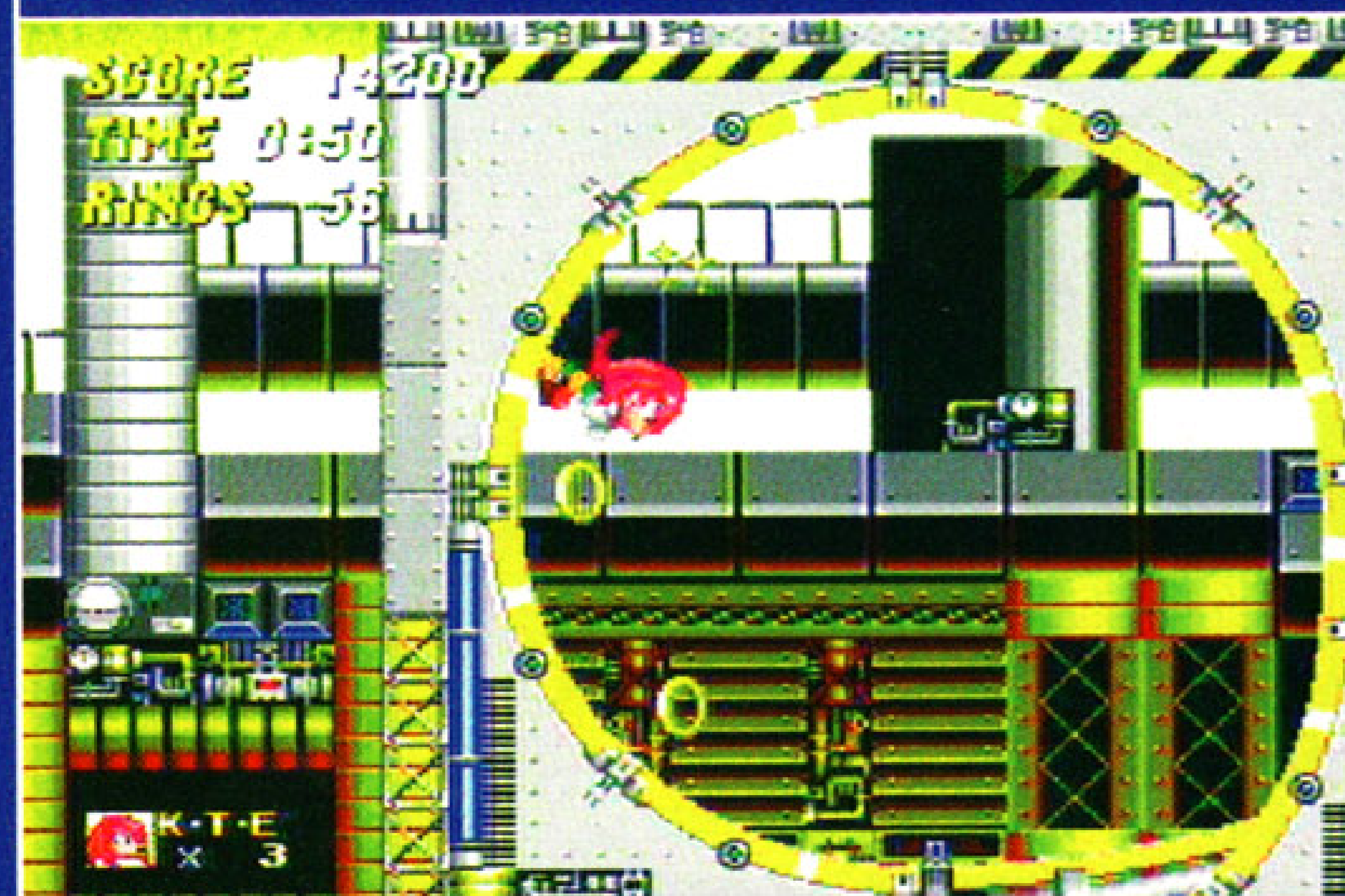


SONIC AND KNUCKLES WITH SONIC 2

Combining Sonic 2 with the Sonic and Knuckles cartridge allows players the opportunity to play Sonic 2 with Knuckles the Echidna taking advantage of all the extra moves he has at his disposal. This means smashing through walls is made easier, gliding over long distances destroying enemies as you go and, best of all, climbing walls to reach previously inaccessible or difficult to find areas.







Super speed is achieved after circling the loop-the-loop as Knuckles in Sonic 2.

SONIC AND KNUCKLES WITH SONIC 3

The Sonic and Knuckles with Sonic 3 combination is probably the most impressive of the lot. Not only are you now able to play as Knuckles with all the advantages that brings, but many of the acts have been completely redesigned from their original Sonic 3 incarnation. This is noticeable almost immediately, as the second act on the very first level is completely different with only the boss at the end remaining the same. Awesome stuff.

All-new acts become available when Sonic 3 and Sonic and Knuckles are combined, producing an awesome new Sonic game!









Take advantage of Knuckles' extra moves when playing Sonic 3 and progressing through the game is a far easier task.

SO WHEN'S IT OUT?

Contrary to the ill-informed speculation banded about by other publications, Sonic Jam is definitely getting a UK release soon. Plans are afoot to have it out as soon as August which is great news for Sonic fans everywhere. The most exciting news though is that being a retro pack, Sonic Jam will be hitting UK stores at the amazingly low price of just £34! This also means that Saturn owners will have a good two-three months of solid gameplay before the potentially ground-breaking Phase Two of Project Sonic is released. We can hardly wait!







LAST BRONX

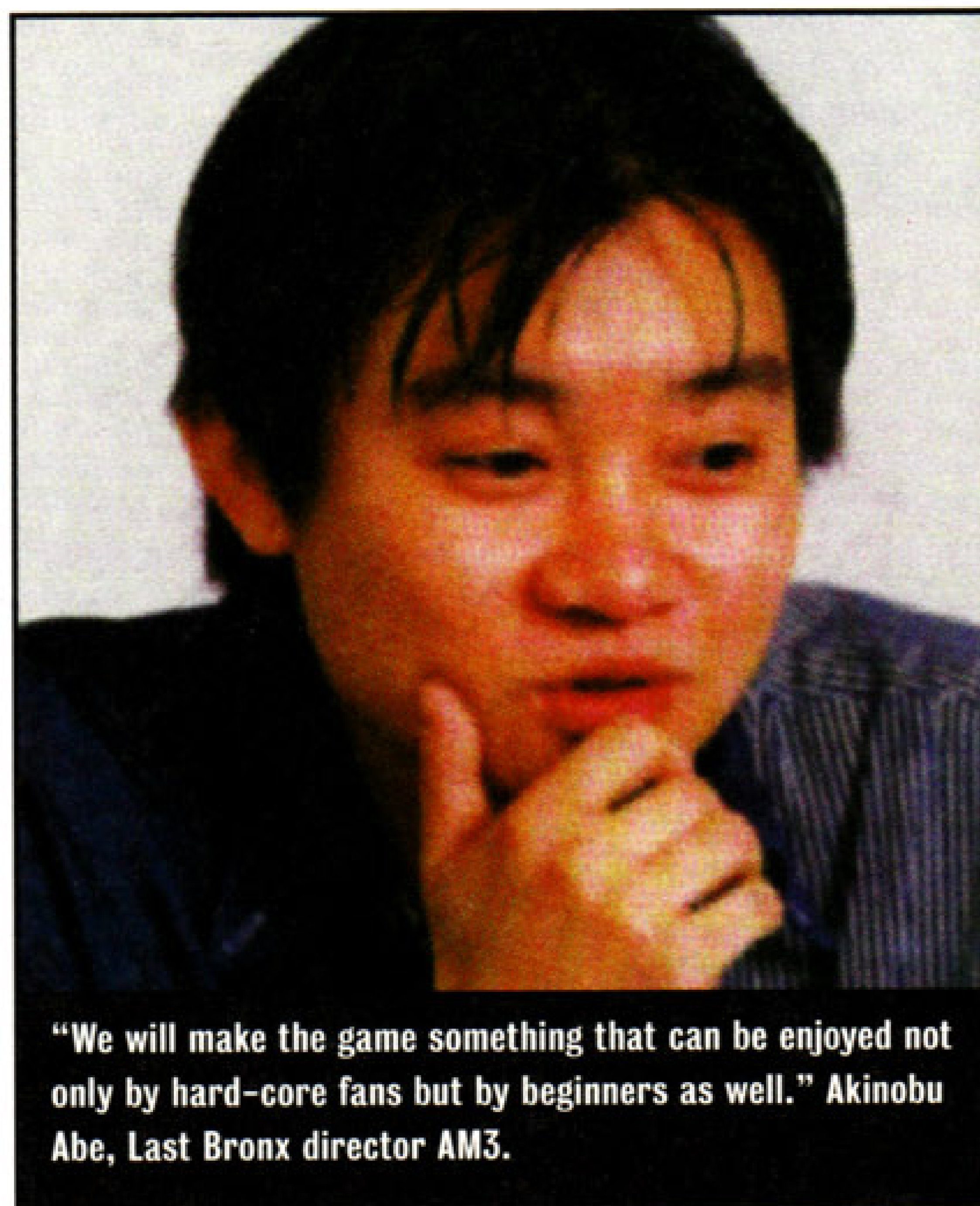
We really wanted to include this last issue, but finally we can bring you a full-on interview with the producer of the Saturn rendition of Last Bronx - Mr Akinobu Abe - here discussing the long and arduous development process behind this outstanding title!

SSM What is the origin of the Saturn conversion of Last Bronx?
AA The arcade version of Last Bronx was introduced to the market in June of '96, and we immediately started receiving many requests for a Saturn conversion. This is the major reason for the decision. The original arcade development staff are in charge of this conversion, in order to achieve the quality that all those fans are expecting.

SSM When did you start the conversion and what were your aims?
AA The official announcement of Last Bronx on the Saturn was made on 8 November 1996 and that is the exact date when this project was started. The key element of this conversion is to reproduce the play feel of the original arcade game. However, at the same time, we will accomplish both "quality of graphics" and "real 3D battle fields" at the highest level seen amongst Saturn polygon fighting games.

SSM Virtua Fighter is obviously a highly popular game. What makes Last Bronx a different game?
AA In Last Bronx, characters have more unique motions by utilising different weapons. Also, all the stages in the game are actual locations in Tokyo, characters' fashions are based on real teenagers clothes and characters are tied together in a very complicated mutual relationship.

SSM Is it true that the original arcade team behind Last Bronx are carrying out the conversion to Saturn? Were any Saturn programming experts added to the team or did they already have experience with the system?
AA The Last Bronx arcade staff are in charge of the Saturn conversion. However, for all of us, including myself, this will be our first Saturn game.


"We will make the game something that can be enjoyed not only by hard-core fans but by beginners as well." Akinobu Abe, Last Bronx director AM3.

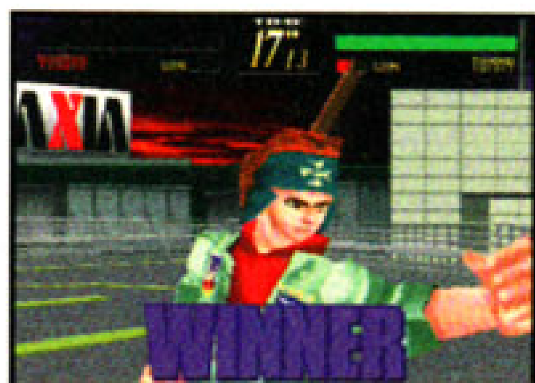
SSM How large is the conversion team and how is the team split in terms of designers, programmers and artists.
AA Unfortunately, we cannot answer this question, at this moment.

SSM Did you have any worries about the capabilities of the Saturn compared to the Model 2 arcade board? Obviously the Saturn isn't quite as powerful...
AA As you can understand, Last Bronx was made with the hardware capability of Model 2 first of all. Model 2 is a high-end CG board, where as the Saturn is a general purpose games machine. We have to admit, we have had some anxiety...

SSM Was there any point in the conversion process where you looked at the arcade game and thought "this just can't be done on the humble Saturn"? If so, how did you manage to do overcome the problem you faced?
AA There are hidden characters called Grey and Metal. An invented technique "pseudo-environmental texture mapping" is being utilised, which was created through the efforts of highly skilled programmers. "Environmental texture mapping" is used for mirror-like effects, such as Virtua Fighter 3's Dural, where surfaces reflect their surrounding scenery. This effect is supported by Model 3, but not Model 2. However, our programmers managed to achieve it with the Model 2 board by boosting the capability of the hardware to its maximum. It seems like reproducing such effects on the Saturn is extremely tough. Also, motion captured characters' clothes (and female characters' bouncing chests) will be very tough to convert onto the Saturn.

The character close-ups at the end of each round show the amount of hi-res detail in the Last Bronx fighters.





SSM What is the process for bringing across a character from the Model 2 arcade board to the Saturn?
AA We initially used the arcade version's polygon models and started adjusting the number of polygons, texture resolution and colour of textures, to create all new models for the Saturn.

SSM How do you bring the movement of the characters across from arcade to Saturn? Obviously there is less memory to use with the Saturn.
AA Yes, the amount of motion data for the arcade game is enormous, but the key point of Last Bronx is its unique gameplay feeling. Almost no data was removed from this part.

SSM Does Last Bronx use the Saturn's high-resolution mode, like Virtua Fighter 2, or low-resolution, like Fighting Vipers?
AA Neither are exactly copied. Just like I mentioned earlier, we used different methods to achieve both better graphics and speed.

SSM The backgrounds in Virtua Fighter 2 on Saturn are 2D. What are your plans for Last Bronx? Can you keep up the speed with polygon backgrounds?
AA We used polygons for objects in the foreground and several 2D images for backgrounds. As a result, we believe the depth represented in this title is better than any other 3D fighting game for the Saturn. You can see the difference when the winning replay sequence is shown from different camera angles.







SSM Some arcade conversions have lower frame rates compared to the original yet Last Bronx appears to run at 60 frames per second like the arcade game. What difficulties did this present to the arcade team?
AA When the project was started, we made up our minds to quit development of Last Bronx unless 60 fps could be achieved. It is quite obvious that the fast movement of weapons is the key to the fun factor of the game and cannot be reproduced without the high frame rate. However, because of those weapons, we believe the Last Bronx characters hit detection routines are much heavier than those of Virtua Fighter. Additionally, we have those graphic difficulties to overcome. No single part of this conversion has been easy so far.

SSM The blur of the weapons' movement was impressive in the arcade game. What difficulties does this present with the Saturn conversion?
AA Since we received very good reaction from arcade players, the motion blurred weapons will remain in the Saturn version. However, some arrangements will have to be made, as the resolution of Saturn is different.

SSM Although Last Bronx has stunning graphics, it also has some very intricate gameplay including a very precise collision detection system - how was this brought across to the Saturn?
AA As we keep mentioning, reproducing the same gameplay feel of the arcade version is our highest priority and accurate hit detection of weapons will also be one of the main factors. We started our programming from this point, as we cannot proceed further without establishing the base of this program.

SSM Last Bronx appeared in a playable form at the recent Tokyo Game Show. What reaction did you receive from the players?
AA Fortunately, we received a very positive reaction from users at the show. We'll try our best to consider their comments as much as possible. For example, the Game Show version ROM did not have the motion blurred weapon effects and we did receive a huge amount of requests for them, especially from fans of the arcade version. It was then that we decided to add the effect (knowing some technical difficulties lay ahead). Users who played the ROM at the show commented that the "characters are larger than those of previous 3D polygon fighting games," that the "textures of faces and clothing looks far more detailed than expected," and that the "motion of the characters is almost





identical to that of the arcade version. It better be, as we used the same data!

SSM The demo version was 30% complete compared to the arcade game. What major aspects were missing that we should be looking forward to?

AA All the characters are in the ROM now (whereas only four were available at the show), with an additional five stages (with all new improved graphics), and motion blur effects. But adjustments will be made until the very last moment of the game's development. We've also started working on Saturn original features recently.

SSM Can you tell us a little about the live action Last Bronx video displayed at the Tokyo Game Show?

AA We have recently launched a "Media Mix" promotional plan for Last Bronx. The video game is the core product but there will also be a novel, radio drama, music/drama CD, comics, and a live action Last Bronx video.

SSM What has been achieved in the weeks since the Tokyo Game Show? Are there any major difficulties still facing you?

AA As we mentioned before, all eight characters are available now, with all the motion data implemented. We are currently working with CPU algorithms, which is one key point of the conversion.

SSM Are you planning to produce a CG intro for the Saturn game? What can we expect to see in the final game?

AA Yes, we will have an opening movie. Fans will definitely love it of course, but it will be something which can introduce new players to the world of Last Bronx.





SSM How important is the distinction between a home and an arcade game? What other Saturn extras can you confirm at this time?

AA The target user is the biggest difference. While arcade players are relatively limited (those who have a knowledge of video games in general), we need to aim the Saturn version at a much wider variety of people. This is something which we had in mind from the very beginning, but we will make the game something which can be enjoyed not only by hard-core fans but by beginners as well.

SSM What plans are there for introducing any new Last Bronx fighters or new weapons into the Saturn conversion?

AA We do not have any plans to add a new character, as it might affect the correlations of existing characters. Meanwhile, we'll put in a hidden "joke weapons" mode which was very well received in the arcade version (for example, Zaimoku's sledgehammer will turn into a frozen tuna, Yusaku's Sansetsukon into model train and Kurosawa's wooden sword into giant fan)

SSM Are there any aspects of the arcade game you were perhaps not 100% happy with and are changing for the Saturn version?

AA It would be a lie if we said we were 100% happy with the arcade version. However, we are still considering any changes from the existing game.

SSM What aspect of the Saturn conversion are you most happy with at the moment?

AA For Saturn fighting games, it's always been a choice between "resolution" or "real 3D backgrounds." However, for this title, we have achieved both.

SSM Finally, what message do you have for the many European Last Bronx fans?

AA Of course, this will be a faithful conversion from the arcade, but we are planning to add many original features for the Saturn version. Our aim is to create a game, not just for hard-core gamers but for Saturn owners. We'll never let you down!

Last Bronx offers hardcore fighting action that even the mighty VF2 will be hard-pressed to match!





MEN IN BLACK



Think quality sports titles and which software company springs to mind? Chances are, it's not who you might think. With a string of classic 16-bit titles under their belt, Codies are back and they've brought Jonah Lomu with them! Our regular commentator, MATT YEO, provides full commentary...







Different pitches change the style of play in Jonah Lomu – as you can see, things are getting pretty frosty in the picture to the right.

A So there I was, 13 years old, as skinny as a rake, decked out in my brand new PE kit, soaked to the bone and absolutely scared stupid. It was a freezing cold Wednesday afternoon and me and my fellow classmates were lined up on the rain-soaked bog that used to be the school playing fields. If the hypothermia-inducing weather didn't kill us, our fearsome teacher would. Mr Bunigar was every school kid's worst nightmare - big, scary and Welsh. Now, whereas previous sports sessions had been taken up with football, athletics and softball, today was our first introduction to that most gentle of sports - rugby. Giving us the kind of look that Lions use when stalking prey, Mr Bunigar gave us our first, and allegedly, most important rugby lesson: "Fall face down!" he shouted. And with that God-like commandment still ringing in our ears, Class 3C closed their eyes and took the mud bath plunge...

It's a true story and one that still makes me cringe at the very mention of the sport. But rugby is, if anything, one of the most misunderstood sports in the world. Think rugby, think

>>









A lot of a game's success these days is drawn from its realism. As you can see, Jonah Lomu's looks are uncanny – it's very close to real rugby!



>> broken noses, cauliflower ears, communal baths and endless songs about miners. While many sports fans may prefer the well-padded, glossy image of American football, the native sport of Wales is often seen as being a bit of a loutish game, only watched by those of us who haven't got the luxury of a regular Sky Sports subscription. The truth, of course, is that rugby is in fact a complicated and technical sport that requires as much professional skill and stamina as any Olympic event. Players may appear to have the intelligence of the average goldfish and the body of King Kong's drinking partners but the sport is currently undergoing something of a major facelift. With the Sports Council and some big name advertisers behind it, rugby is now joining the major sporting leagues as a game that's every bit as worthy as its number one footballing rival.

Enter Jonah Lomu, All-Blacks' star player, the youngest rugby international to play for New Zealand's premiere team and 6'4" of solid power. When the All-Blacks faced England in the Five Nations tournament a few years ago, Jonah casually devastated our defence shrugging the likes of Will Carling aside as if they were mere cardboard cutouts. Since then, Jonah's reputation has grown and he's considered by many to be an international ambassador for the sport. So when those ever inventive types at Codemasters decided to produce a 32-bit rugby video game, their first choice for a familiar face to promote their new title was none other than old tree trunk thighs himself.





RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

In an attempt to offer Saturn owners a playable and accessible sports game, Codemasters enlisted the none too shabby programming talents of Birmingham based Rage Software, also responsible for the likes of Striker '96 and er, Doom. Attempting to take the encyclopedia-sized rules of such a complicated game and simplify them for an audience more at home with the fast-paced action of the FIFA series, has been a real challenge for the programming team. Fortunately, extra development time, resulting in the game's release date being pushed back to the end of June, has ensured that they've been able to do just that. Top bloke at Rage, Trevor Williams says: "We want to make this the best rugby game ever. We could have bashed it out, but neither we or Codemasters

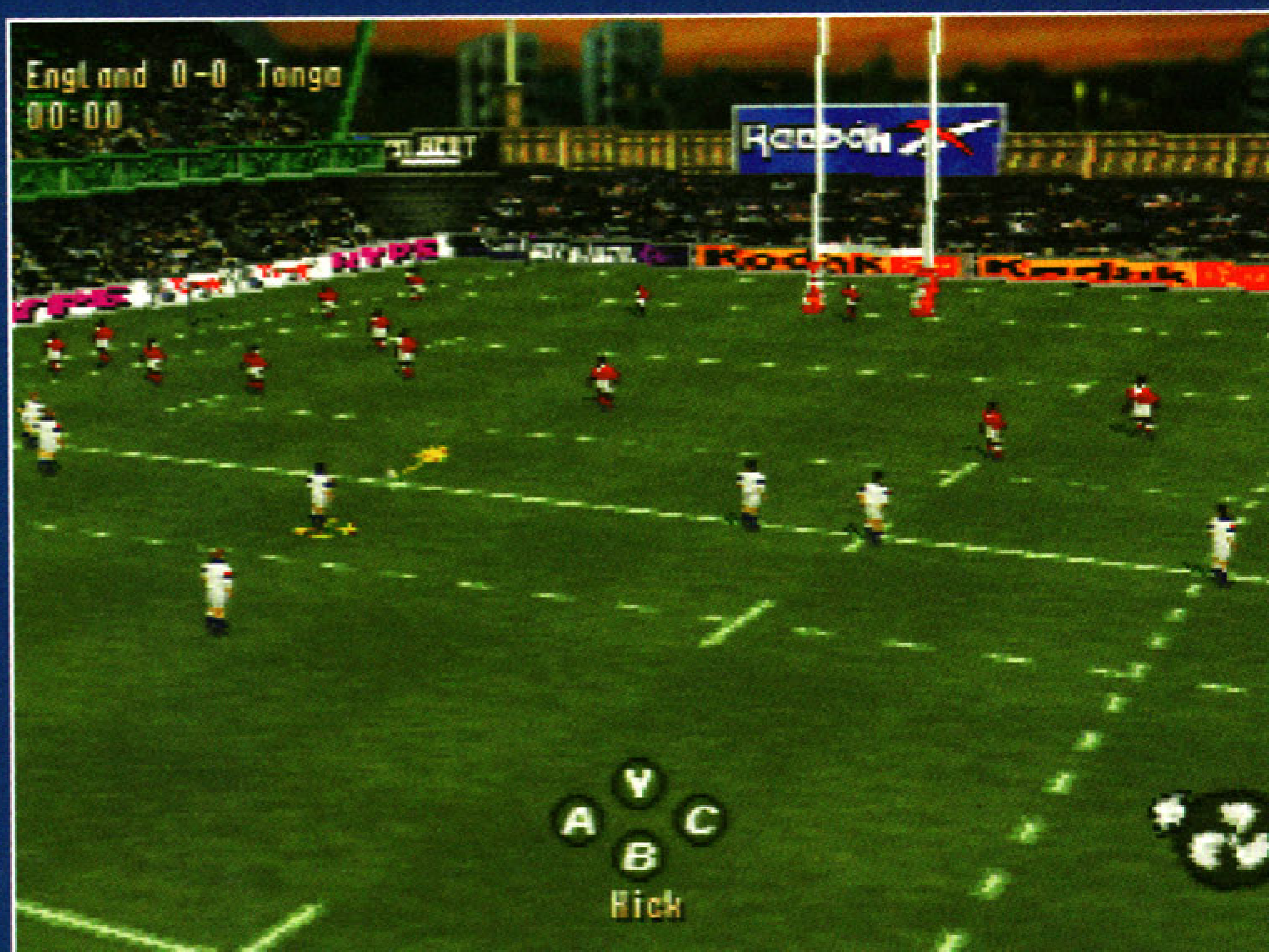
The intuitive and simple to learn control system makes Jonah Lomu something of a joy to play.



The camera shifts to intelligent positions during play, as can be witnessed in the screenshot shown above.

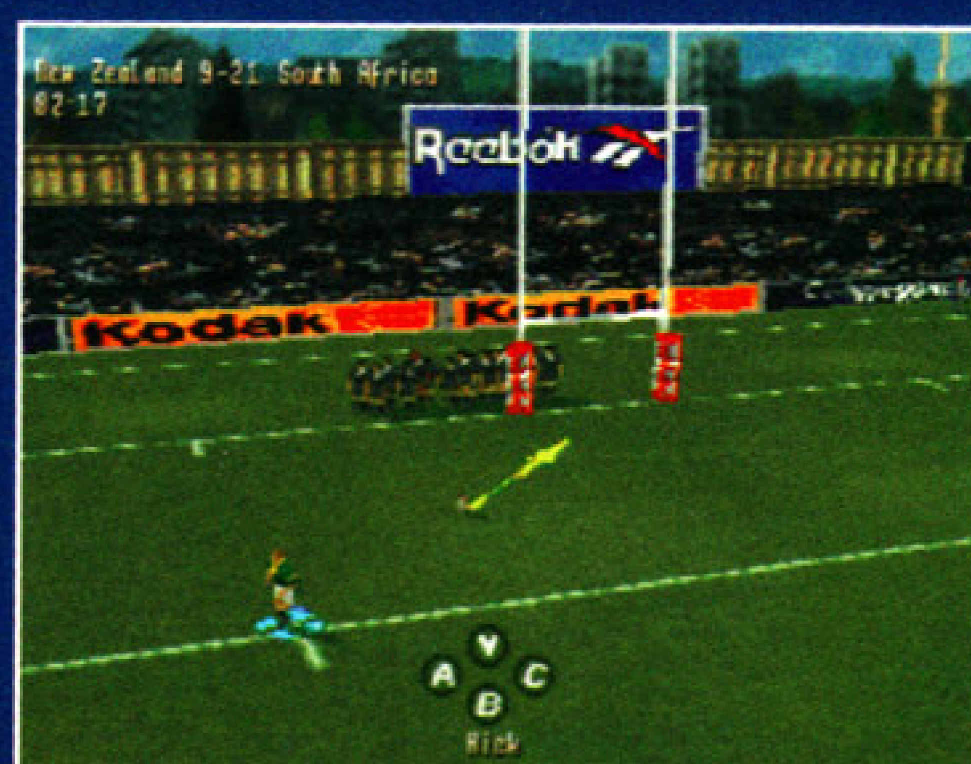






Some of the camera views you get of the action are nothing short of spectacular.





In the picture above, one of the sides has scored a try and the team are now going for the extra point by kicking it over the bar.

wanted that. The time that has been added on to the original deadline shows how we're not rushing any element of the gameplay. The scrum, for example, has had five different models to make it work in play. We've scrapped them all, for various reasons. That's a month of work, I suppose, but we wanted to get it just right."

True to their word, Rage and Codemasters have certainly spent that extra time wisely as Jonah Lomu Rugby is surely one of the most playable sports games to date. Set within one of four variable weather stadia, players control not just one talented teamster but the whole musclebound squad. Thanks to a unique series of in-game menus, players have the option to either leap straight into the thick of things or take their time, mastering every nuance and rugby tactic that's been crammed into this action-packed title. When beginning a game, players are offered a selection of options allowing lengthy tournaments to be played out or straightforward single matches pitting humans against the CPU or man against man. Let's take a quick look at the five types of game on offer:



Side-on perspective action as the two teams clash violently. Oooh, looks quite painful...





The presentation in Jonah Lomu is equivalent to the excellent EA Sports series in terms of stats and menu.

FRIENDLY MATCH

To ease novice players into what many sports fans consider to be an often complicated game, due in part to its many rules and depth of play, a Friendly Match is just the place to start. This first option allows players to select from one of 30 international teams and compete against any other squad in one of four varied stadiums. The opposing teams range from the battering ram style play of the English and Welsh squads to such butter-fingered ball boys as Germany and America.

TOURNAMENT

A few games down the line and players will be ready for a bit of real competition. The Tournament option enables up to four players to challenge each other in a series of knockout matches with either four, eight or 16 teams entered into each bout. If a player's first team is knocked out of the running, they simply switch to their next squad and so on until they're either victorious or severely trounced. Teams not selected by players are chosen at random by the CPU.





WORLD CUP

Now the pace really starts to pick up as players attempt to take on the whole world in a series of hard-hitting, hair-pulling, bloody nosed bouts to determine just who is the champion of champions. Reach first or second position in the preliminary pool matches and you go through to face the best rugby teams on the face of the planet before meeting the ultimate challenge at the World Cup Final.

TERRITORIES CUP

Of course, as with many other sports, the challenge of the World Cup is only reached upon successful completion of a number of smaller competitions. So, for instance, as in football, where teams compete for the FA Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup, so rugby fans test their skills in one of five Territories Cups. By dividing the globe into separate territories, players take on the best teams in each league.

CLASSIC MATCH

Jonah Lomu's Classic Match options enables players to live out their fantasies by tackling some of the all-time great rugby squads. Longtime fans of the sport now get the chance to take part in some of history's most famous rugby showdowns and directly influence the course of these matches.





SAVAGE SKIES

As mentioned earlier, Jonah Lomu Rugby may only feature four basic stadia in which to play, but each ground also boasts some finely detailed weathering effects to spice up the game's realism. Before commencing a match, players are presented with a series of options allowing them to customise individual matches tailoring everything to their particular needs. From the severity of the rules for penalties and offsides to such climate conditions as rain, snow and glorious sunshine. The latter options obviously greatly affect matches with sudden gusts of wind limiting throw distances and poor visibility hampering team play.

Although players control an entire rugby squad, the game's intuitive AI makes guiding fifteen sweaty blokes all that much easier. When a match begins, an individual player is highlighted by a rotating indicator with a secondary player marked with a lighter arrow. By pressing the A button, players move through the team's ranks until they reach the individual they wish to control. When play begins for real, a number of on-screen menus appear, allowing players to select specific moves such as passing, tackling, kicking the ball and numerous others. As in the real game, players may pass the ball in any direction but not forward. This is accomplished by kicking, passing or handing off to other team members who are within reach. As the sprites in Jonah Lomu Rugby are so large, there's never a problem when it comes to spotting fellow team members waiting to receive the ball.





Well... there's lots of running about but not too much else going on here.









WHAT DO POINTS MAKE?

Of course, the real objective of any sport is to score points. This is where many newcomers to the sport become confused, although it's really quite simple to remember. A try is worth five points (this happens when the ball is grounded in the opponent's goal area) and a goal (when the ball is kicked through the posts and over the crossbar) is worth either two points, for a converted goal, or three points for a drop kick goal. With that in mind, players are basically left to decide whether they're going to attempt to smash through the opposition's defence or, when facing tougher opponents, attempt to score from further away. Just remember, which ever style of game you play, your team is going to emerge battered and bruised with the experience of either their winning defeat or glorious victory adding to their overall experience. As rugby certainly has the potential to be fairly violent, players often find themselves stopping frequently to take penalties. A penalty kick is given on a number of occasion, such as when a player is tackled before he has possession of the ball or if a player catches the ball when he's in an offside position, must be taken ten metres back from the foul. The ball is then place kicked or drop kicked toward the goal then carried forward by the opposition before they're stopped. Therefore the aim, as in American football, is to keeping pushing into the opposing team's territory before reaching the goal line.

The overall speed and fluidity of Jonah Lomu Rugby is most impressive considering the amount of polygons the game is chucking around.





A bit of front-end presentation shown right here.

SPORT FOR ALL

To keep all of this frantic action visible, players select from a number of playing angles, each of which provides Sky Sports style coverage of the ensuing match. By pausing the game, it's also possible to study team stats showing the accuracy of passes, shots taken and the number of fouls committed.

With so many levels of detail, Jonah Lomu Rugby could easily have surfaced as a complicated sports title only accessible to hardcore fans. Fortunately Rage and Codemasters have taken the time and effort to please both newcomers and experienced rugby players alike by producing a fast-paced, intuitive title that easily ranks amongst the finest sports games ever seen on Saturn. So that's Codemasters - 1, EA - 0.







Aha... this will be more presentation style activities then.

SEGA RALLY FOR REAL!

Just how close are the Sega racing games to the real thing? Can today's cutting edge 3D technology and advanced gameplay really replicate the high-speed thrills and spills of hardcore motorsport? RICH LEADBETTER takes the co-driver seat in a real-life Toyota Celica GT4... let's go burn some rubber!

If you notice I haven't written so much this month... mostly down to the fact that I spent a fortnight of this issue's schedule in Los Angeles taking a well earned break visiting my mate Julian Rignall (you remember, the guy who invented video games magazines).

One of our little excursions saw us travel up into the Sierra Nevada mountains to check out the press launch for the bizarrely titled Rim of the World Rally. Now, you have to remember that rallying isn't half as popular over in the States where NASCAR and IndyCar rule, but the sport is slowly gaining momentum and more foreign drivers are joining the US rallies making them true world class events. In order to promote the sport a bit more, the organisers held a press day where selected journalists could hitch a ride with pro rally drivers on a section of the dirt-track mountain top stage which would form part of the main rally!

ENTER... THE TOYOTA CELICA!

My ride was a vehicle which has been immortalised in the classic Sega Rally - the super-sleek Toyota Celica GT4, in this case driven by a certain Bruce Newie - a man I would come to recognise as a truly maniacal driver!

The rally car itself is based on the production model but with some serious modifications. Just about the entire interior is ripped out - even the dash board is completely demolished! The trim on the doors is also absent, with sheet metal replacing it. An enormous welded roll cage is added to the car's interior... should the worst happen... The emphasis here is obviously on making the car as light as possible, removing all elements of comfort and boosting speed.



This particular car has had some serious modifications. The Celica's a four-wheel drive car, but Bruce and his team have changed the car to rear wheel drive in order to meet the qualifications for this particular rally. He also informed me that the entire transmission in his Celica is ripped out from a Toyota MR2 in order to compensate for the changes.

This pretty much remains the car we all know and love from Sega Rally, though, and it was with a mixture of anticipation and downright anxiety that I strapped myself into the co-driver's seat and donned the obligatory helmet.

SPECIAL STAGE

The section of the course ahead of us was chosen to represent the sort of conditions the drivers would be going through on the actual rally. Right up in the mountains under the baking Los Angeles sun (with no ozone layer to speak of), the conditions were extremely hot - inside the Celica the thermometer registered 108 degrees Fahrenheit! The conditions made for a super-dusty track which snaked its way around the mountain, often right next to a huge sheer drop... which did wonders for my nerves! The track looked kind of like a cross between the desert and mountain courses in Sega Rally.

Strapping myself into the car (you get aircraft style multiple belts to keep you in the chair) and checking the helmet's intercom system, I prepared myself for the worst.

Bruce Newie wasn't taking any prisoners. Despite this event being a mere exhibition he had a reputation for taking any opportunity to drive his car to the edge. By the time it was my turn to take a ride, the Celica had already taken some battle damage, losing a small part of the plastic bodywork when Bruce had clipped the edge of a tree trunk on one of his maniacal 50mph powerslides. While search teams were despatched to find the missing panel, Bruce lamented that the car probably suffered a quarter-of-a-second speed loss due to its absence.



AND WE'RE OFF!

The rally official's digits were literally a foot in front of me as he counted us down. Three. Two. One.

And suddenly we're accelerating. We're REALLY accelerating. Right up to 50mph and the car's barely breaking a sweat. Oddly enough we're still accelerating madly as we powerslide into the first corner, Bruce expertly handling the steering, counter-steering us back on course. This madness continues on every corner - I swear that even on the tightest bends we're still managing 30mph, the rear of the vehicle swinging out around the corners.

I know I should probably be in fear of my life at this point, but Bruce Newie is just so damn relaxed, carrying out an everyday conversation with me over the intercom that I realise that this suicidal driving is second nature to him. So I can afford to relax a little. Just a little.

OVER JUMP!

The overall impression of the drive is that Sega Rally does a great job of replicating a real rally drive within its limitations. The oversteer on the car that American journalists in particular have moaned about is exactly as it is in real life. However, the sheer noise of the engine, the dust and stones ricocheting off the windscreen, the sound of tyres desperately trying to stick to the dusty track... that's kind of missing, as is the fear that you could well be dead in the next few minutes.

Bruce's fight to keep control of the rear-wheel drive vehicle is very reminiscent of the sort of thing you have to put up with when driving the Lancia Stratos in Sega Rally (the only two-wheel drive vehicle in the game), so I guess that in terms of driving mechanics, AM3 did a splendid job on Sega Rally.

One thing that is entirely different in real life is how the jumps (or water troughs) are handled in real life. We're quite happy to be sent flying into the air in the game, but to be honest, when we approached a jump in the car, this was just about the only time that Bruce Newie applied the brakes. Obviously the suspension on the real car is just a bit more delicate than it is in the video game!

One particularly amusing story of the day concerned the driver of a Volvo rally car who not only took the water trough at high speed, but also took to the air SIDEWAYS having failed to correct his power-slide in time. Ouch.

EASY RIGHT MAYBE!

So what does the co-driver do in the Rally car? Well typically he spends his time with his nose buried in the map giving directions to the driver, warning him of what's coming up. Just like Sega Rally then eh?

Well, no. For a start a real rally co-driver could never get away with saying "Easy right maybe" before taking on a mammoth chicane! On a stage like the one we were on, anything other than pinpoint accuracy would result in us flying off the side of the mountain!

Bruce Newie pointed out that the real pro rally drivers - like the guys who take on the RAC - use a kind of points system rating the severity of a corner on a scale from one to six. So no crappy "Long medium right" advice like Sega Rally's co-driver regularly comes up with. Instead you'd get a single number telling the driver all he needs to know about how to handle the upcoming corner in the stage.

HOW CLOSE IS SEGA RALLY?

The dynamics of rally driving have been transferred from real life to videogame extremely well in Sega Rally Championship, but I do feel that a lot of the experience is missing. You can take on the courses in Sega Rally like a mad-man, basically because your car is indestructible! Not so in real life, where drivers are ever-aware of how much punishment they're putting their cars through.

Daytona USA had "battle damage" so why not Sega Rally (or indeed Sega Touring Car or Manx TT SuperBike)? Additionally, the stages in Rally, although great for a videogame, seem to lack the wildness and the danger of the real thing. That's perhaps the greatest shortcoming of Sega Rally compared to the real thing: it's just too safe, a precision exercise in driving as opposed to the constant improvisation I saw going on. As amazing as Sega Rally is, I reckon there's a huge amount of improvement AM Annex could do, especially if they did a sequel based on Model 3 technology...



TOP SKATER™
SEGA SKATEBOARDING





This month, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE presents an exclusive in-depth interview with AM3's Hisao Oguchi and Kenji Kanno and discover if they're as street-wise as their coin-op creation.

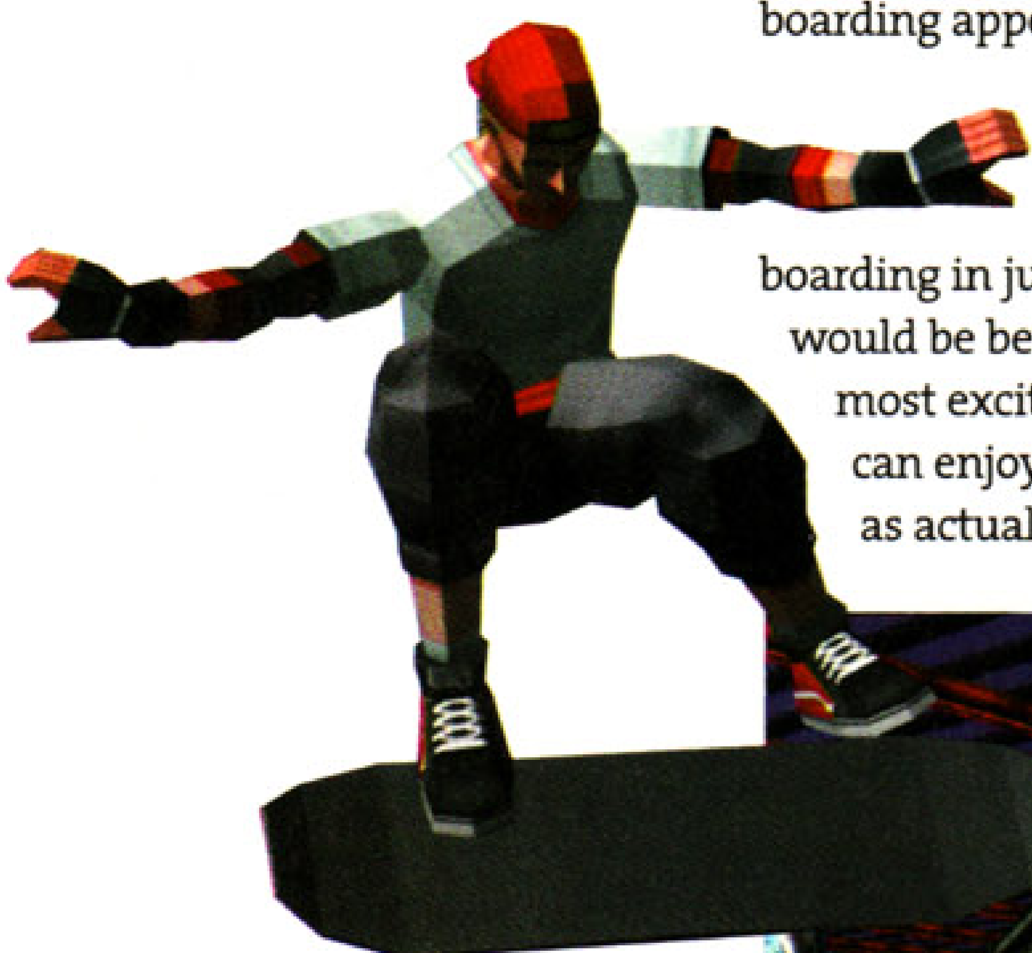
Top: Mr Hisao Oguchi, General Manager AM R&D Dept #3. Below: Mr Kenji Kanno, Planning & Direction Section AM R&D Dept #3.

Many thanks to Mr Shunsuke Kato (not pictured), Planning & Direction Section AM R&D Dept #3

SSM What inspired you to produce an arcade game that simulates the sport of skateboarding?

AM3 Well, as a matter of fact, it's not actually a simulation game. What we wanted to express in this game were the images of skateboarding. If Top Skater was a true simulation game you wouldn't be able to do any of those tricks at all. In real skateboarding the movements aren't particularly showy or impressive. What we wanted to do most was to express the cool images we had about skateboarding. The images we have might differ from other people but for us, skateboarding has always been one of coolest things around since we were students. We've practised skateboarding and snowboarding. We wanted to express the images we had, so it's not a simulation game. Of course it contains the taste of skateboarding. The tricks that the skateboarders use are actually reflected in the game, but the movements are exaggerated. I think that if the tricks were the same as the actual ones then they would look much worse than the ones the top skateboarders do. So I wanted to put some amazing tricks into the game that you wouldn't expect, so that the skateboarding appears really cool. I'm not saying that it is a surrealistic simulation but more an emphatic simulation. If the game was a true simulation where you could only enjoy skateboarding in just the same way as real skateboarding, it would be better to go skateboarding for real. The most exciting thing about Top Skater is that you can enjoy unrealistic tricks. If the game only had the same tricks as actual skateboarding it it wouldn't be very exciting because skateboarding is so difficult that the average person can't do any of the tricks. We also tried skateboarding but it was more difficult than we thought so we gave it up. But, if you want to be cool in a game, you can do it easily with Top Skater. It's great fun being able to quickly do cool things in a game. I think the game is more accessible because you can skateboard easily and you can do tricks that are even more difficult than ones in real skateboarding.





SSM Were you at all influenced by any of the recent snowboarding games?

AM3 No, we weren't particularly influenced. We studied them of course. We always study other companies' products. However, a certain "N" company has already made a game using snow therefore we chose skateboarding as the theme of this game. Top Skater is completely different.

SSM How does skateboarding and snowboarding fashion differ?

AM3 Basically they are the same because snowboarding was invented by the same people who used to go skateboarding. Fashionwise, we'd say that you need warm clothes for the snow and light clothes for the street (laughs). Both are comparable with each other in terms of cool fashion. That's one of the reasons why snowboarding is becoming more and more popular in Japan. Thus Top Skater is enjoyable because it's cool and fashionable.

SSM What kind of player did you create Top Skater for?

AM3 We like to attract new users by making something new. I think the core game players are almost always the same so it's no use making ordinary games. We have to try something new. That's the policy of AM 3. What should we do now? We should attract young people first because the number of young people playing video games is decreasing. What are they interested in? Music and fashion. These really catch the attention of young people. So to attract them we chose to use skateboarding. We did location tests several times and we found that even people who rarely played video games enjoyed playing Top Skater very much. Of course, we have to keep the core players as well so we included a game system that they can also enjoy. We think we can attract people who are interested in street fashion as new users. There aren't any complicated rules are there? We'd like the users to enjoy the game in their own way. Recently, there have been a lot of complicated games where you have to play such games seriously and in a tense way. Against the background of that we've created Top Skater so that it can be enjoyed easily and freely. Some of the ways to enjoy it are to satisfy yourself by accomplishing vari-



Triple Flips, Nose Grabs, Indys, Nollies, Heelflips and Handflips. Top Skater features all these cool tricks and many more.



Just one of the two tricky courses to be tackled in AM3's Top Skater.



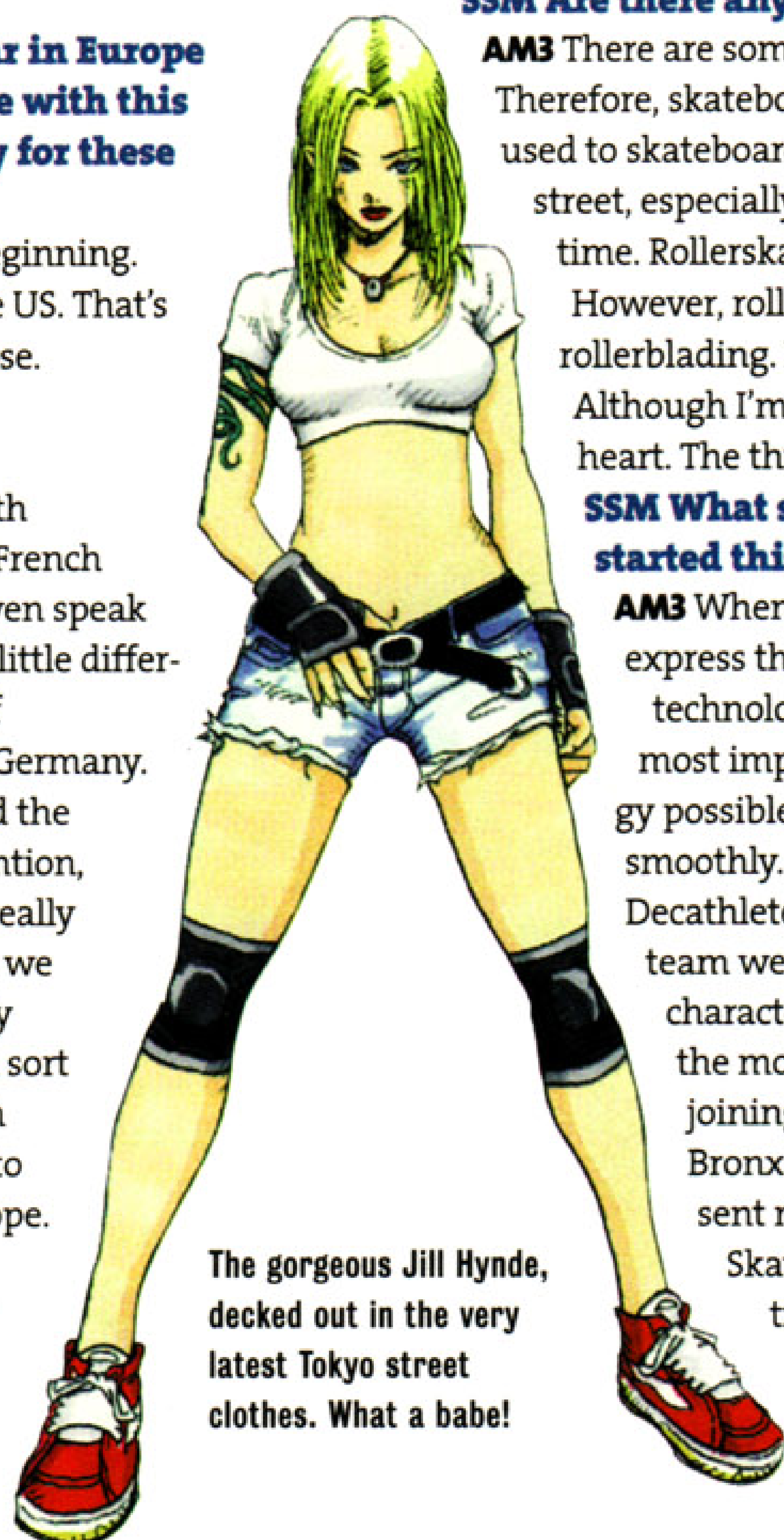



ous tricks or by showing others how cool you look. Another way is just to go around the course in your own way. Actually, it's not a racing game. The goal isn't to race as fast as possible. Of course it's an arcade game, so there are some conditions attached, but we think there are various ways to enjoy the game.

SSM Skateboarding seems to be more popular in Europe and America than in Japan. Would you agree with this and if so did you create Top Skater especially for these markets?
AM3 Definitely! We had this plan from the very beginning. We expect that Top Skater will sell very well in the US. That's why we included the images of America on purpose.

SSM What about Europe?
AM3 We're not sure because we're not familiar with Europe. It depends on the country. American and French cultures won't blend at all. French people won't even speak English. Even American and British cultures are a little different although their roots are the same. Speaking of European music, punk rock originally came from Germany. We think that punk rock will appeal to Britain and the other European countries. We can catch their attention, not through viewpoints, but by music. We're not really sure as we've never been to Europe, but the music we used is a kind of rock music which we call "Melody Core" in Japan. It comes from rock music and it's a sort of punk rock. There are a lot of punk rock artists in Europe, especially in Britain and Germany. Come to think of it, we're sure punk rock is popular in Europe.

SSM I rarely see people skateboarding. How popular is skateboarding in Japan?
AM3 Nowadays, we seldom see skateboarders either. Most of the people who used to go skateboarding are now fascinated with snowboarding. The housing situation in Japan is pretty bad. As you know, Japan is a small country so there isn't enough space to go skateboarding and we don't like to bother our neighbours. In America they've got plenty of space.


The gorgeous Jill Hynde, decked out in the very latest Tokyo street clothes. What a babe!

SSM Are there any special skateboard parks in Japan?
AM3 There are some, here and there I guess, but not enough. Therefore, skateboarders are forced to skateboard in the street. I used to skateboard more than ten years ago. I did it on the street, especially in Harajuku. Skateboarding was a fad at that time. Rollerskating was also popular at that time as well. However, rollerskating has now been replaced by rollerblading. I can still recall those memories clearly. Although I'm not so young any more, I'm still young at heart. The things I used to admire haven't changed.

SSM What sort of research did you do when you started this project?
AM3 When we considered what we needed most to express the images in Top Skater, we found that the technology to express the character motion was the most important. We used the most advanced technology possible to express the character's movements smoothly. At AM 3 we've worked on Last Bronx and Decathlete before, so we have a lot of know how. In our team we have somebody who developed some of the character motion in Last Bronx. He was in charge of the motion in Top Skater. He did a very good job of joining the various motions together smoothly. Last Bronx and Decathlete used 2D techniques to represent movement in a flat screen, but this time Top Skater uses 3D techniques. For the first time we tried to express complicated movements, smoothly in a 3D environment. For example, when you do tricks the distances you can jump differ from situation to situation. We had to develop new software and design








Performing cool tricks is more important than simply finishing the course in record time.

techniques accordingly to handle the smoothness of the movements. We had to develop them all in a different way. When the skater is in mid-air his position on the horizontal and vertical axis changes several times. We had a hard time adjusting each movement to match it. We made a great effort to get that right. We also had difficulty deciding on the camera angles as well. In fighting games the fighters are usually depicted from the side. In recent fighting games they are sometimes shown from above when they win a round. In Top Skater the camera is always changing its position. For example, when a character leaps off the track he might be seen from above, behind, in front or from any side. We needed to make sure that the camera's viewpoint made the movements of characters look cool from no matter where the camera was placed. That took a lot of time. However, even though the camera keeps moving from place to place it doesn't get in the way. We're proud that although the camera is often moving it doesn't make Top Skater difficult to play. We researched that aspect carefully.



Whoa, check out the shorts on Keith Frehly! This dude's a massive Pennywise fan.

SSM Did all the team members practice skateboarding beforehand?

AM3 No, they didn't. Of course, in order to create this game we should've experienced in advance the actual feelings of skateboarding. For example, if you make a rally car racing game you should ride in a real rally car. However, in the case of skateboarding, none of the team could skateboard. It's really difficult. I practised skateboarding for only five hours, but I quit in case I got hurt. If I'd had to go to hospital then the development wouldn't have been able to continue (laughs). I think it would probably take more than a year for us to be able to skateboard well. Instead, we went to a lot of places and watched professional skateboarders perform. We did a lot of research. We watched many videos of skateboarding and snowboarding. Some of them we bought while the others we took ourselves when we went to see skateboarding and snowboarding competitions. We also talked with professional skateboarders several times as well.

SSM Was the original intention to produce a straight forward racing game? Did the tricks come later?

AM3 No it wasn't. We kept on discussing which was better, tricks or racing, right up until the final stage. Some people thought that racing was better because it's easier for the users to understand. However, from the beginning, I wanted to adopt tricks. It wouldn't make any sense to make a skateboard racing game. You don't need to skateboard as fast as you can. I just wanted to make the game cool and fashionable. If the game were a racing game you wouldn't want to do any tricks as you'd be absorbed in trying to race as fast as possible.



Points are awarded for spectacular jumps, tricks and stunts. The flaming wheels indicate a player's top speed.



SSM What input did you receive from real life skateboarders during the development of Top Skater and did it change your original ideas for the game?

AM3 Not really. We've completed the game with the same image we originally had. We met up with professional skateboarders when the game was nearly finished, when we'd finally reached an agreement on what kind of game it should be Then we asked them what they thought about the unrealistic tricks, adding that we had included all the main tricks as well. They were pleased with the idea. They said that the unrealistic tricks wouldn't ruin the game and that on the contrary it sounded exciting. They liked it. They said that the realistic tricks in the game looked just like the real ones. For example, the Kick Flip or something like that. I think that reflects the considerable efforts the development team made to get the character motion right. They even suggested some new tricks they wanted us to include. We enjoyed discussing it with them. At one time we joined a snowboard event and offered Top Skater for them to play with. I heard a professional snowboarder was playing the game for quite a while and seemed to be pleased with it.

SSM This time you didn't use any motion capture for Top Skater. Why was this?

AM3 Because some of the tricks in the game are so unreal that there is nobody who could do them. That's the simple reason why. To do such showy tricks would require a vast studio and we'd need to use some kind of trampoline or something. It would be impossible even for a top skateboarder so we created all the characters' movements with our own hands.

SSM How did you create such smooth character motion?

AM3 I think our designers have a good sense for this. We're sure that they're amongst the best in the industry. I certainly think that AM3 is the best development group for this kind of game. We made Last Bronx and Decathlete before, so we've got a lot of know-how. We have many excellent motion designers who are unique. They really are talented. Even if there was a skateboarder who was capable of doing the unrealistic tricks and we were able to use motion capture, the game still wouldn't be any more exciting than Top Skater is already.

SSM In Top Skater you can even slide along the railings with your skateboard. How exactly did you manage that kind of difficult collision detection?

AM3 We can't tell you that precisely because it's a secret. Handling this kind of 3D collision detection has never been accomplished before. We really had a lot of difficulty with this. The CPU is under a heavy burden of having to calculate all the collision detection algorithms. Actually, it took a lot of time in the early stages to get the characters moving. We had to focus all our attention on this area. After all, there are all kinds of terrain along the course, such as banks, ramps and raised areas, where the users can freely move. So we need-



ed a lot of new and advanced techniques to be able to handle all of the various kinds of collisions that are possible. Both the visual techniques and the collision detection are really new.

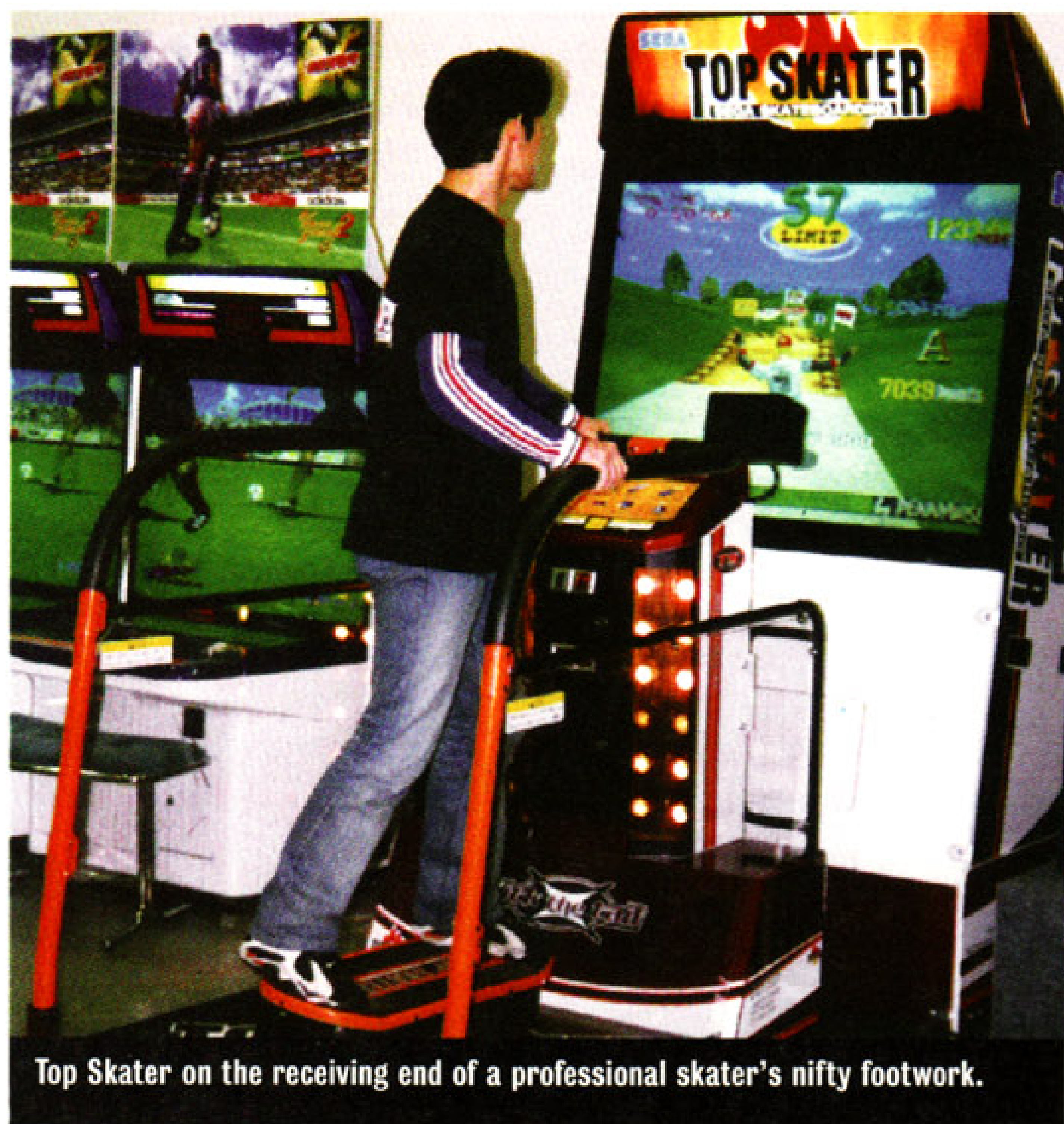
SSM Compared to other games, the collision detection in Top Skater is an essential element isn't it?
AM3 That's right. It really feels great when you're skating along the banks. I'm not criticising other companies, but only we have the techniques to do that (laugh). It was very difficult and it took a lot of time for the programmers to create the programs that could handle the collision detection within a 3D environment. After we got that working it didn't take us much time because all we had to do next was add the various character movements. The collision detection was the most time consuming element.

SSM Did you believe from the very beginning that it was possible to create such a difficult game?
AM3 Of course! Of course! (laugh)

SSM What kind of reference material did you use to create the tricks?
AM3 We referred to videos and magazines. We also had advice from professional skateboarders. However, for inventing the new tricks we mainly used our imagination. If we had an interesting idea for a trick we'd give it a go and see how it turned out. We kept the main core of basic tricks from beginning to end. After that we tried to develop the unrealistic tricks. We kept recombining a mixture of different kinds of tricks. We had to use our imagination because these tricks don't exist. Like our concept, the word "cool" is the most important idea. We failed several times trying to make new tricks simply because they weren't cool at all. By the way, several months ago when we were developing the game, Michael Jackson came to Japan and saw Top Skater. He only said one thing, "Cool!"

SSM Which tricks were the most difficult to develop?
AM3 Creating the 3D movement for when you jumped of a bank or ramp and then span around, was the most troublesome. More than just creating the tricks it was also difficult trying to use our imagination. Using the real tricks as a reference, we researched how we could deform their motion to create new tricks. I think the designers really had to work hard trying to think up the unrealistic tricks. It took the designers' feelings, courage and sense.

SSM How many tricks does each character have?
AM3 Each character has more than 100 tricks. They all have the same easy tricks in common. For example, the tricks where the user only has to kick the rear end of the board. However, depending on the complexity of the board input they can do different types of tricks. These differ for each character. Users who are good at inputting can create their character's own tricks.



Top Skater on the receiving end of a professional skater's nifty footwork.

SSM Apart from the score, what other rewards are there for performing complex tricks?
AM3 Other than the score you can go faster. If you increase your speed, you can take advantage of this when you try to do your next trick. The difficulty of a trick ranges from "S" to "E". The more difficult the trick you do, the faster your speed gets. In the bottom left corner of the screen is a spinning wheel. When you travel fast enough, flames start coming off it.

SSM Is it possible to increase your speed by swaying from left to right?
AM3 Yes, but only a little bit. Just by looking you can't really tell. If it was possible to generate an extreme speed, it wouldn't be possible to maintain the technical balance. You can only get a little higher speed and you can't tell the difference in speed because the speed changes little by little. However, you can't keep it up very long because you'll soon encounter an obstacle or jump ramp.

SSM How did you go about designing the courses?
AM3 The courses in Top Skater have a lot of freedom for the players to move around. We thought a lot about how we were going to configure the arrangement of the pipe slides, banks and jump ramps etc. We wanted to create dramatic courses. It feels good to have successfully passed thorough an area which required a lot of skill. In particular, we took a lot of trouble in positioning the ramps and straight sections of the courses. This is because after you make a jump, you have to move straight ahead for a while and we were worried about making the courses full of straight sections, which would be boring. We had to do a lot of research and keep adjusting the courses bearing this in mind. After that, there were also the corners to consider and then the course line as well. The most difficult thing was to realise our idea of allowing the player to be able to move around freely. That was hard to do.

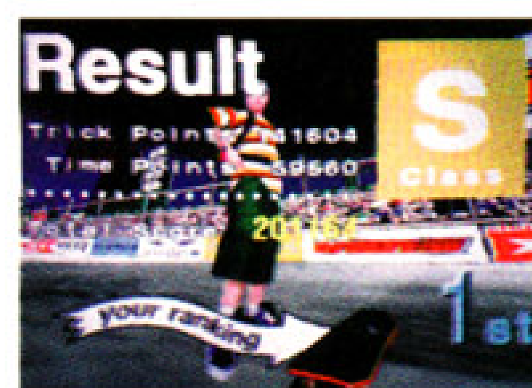
SSM Were the courses based on existing skate parks or did you create your own ideal courses?
AM3 Not at all. We constructed the courses so that they would be enjoyable to play. If we had used real courses the game would have probably been boring. I'm sure we reflected the concept of fun in the game. Actually, real skateboarders skate in confined areas. It would cost a fortune to try and build a real course as long as ours. Maybe if you were an Arabian oil billionaire? It sounds like a lot of fun though! (laughs)

SSM The line of each course is divided in an upper and lower route. How exactly are they different?
AM3 We just wanted the users to be able to enjoy choosing their own way through the courses. Imagine there's a jump ramp at the top and oil drums at the bottom. Those who want to be cool and slalom through the drums, can choose the lower route. Those who'd like to move straight ahead easily by jumping, can choose the upper route. There are different ways to enjoy playing. As the hard core gamers are better players, they can choose the routes which are more favourable for getting a higher score. On the other hand, those who'd prefer to just move freely and look cool can take another route instead. As it's not a race, we'd like the users to enjoy themselves in their own way.

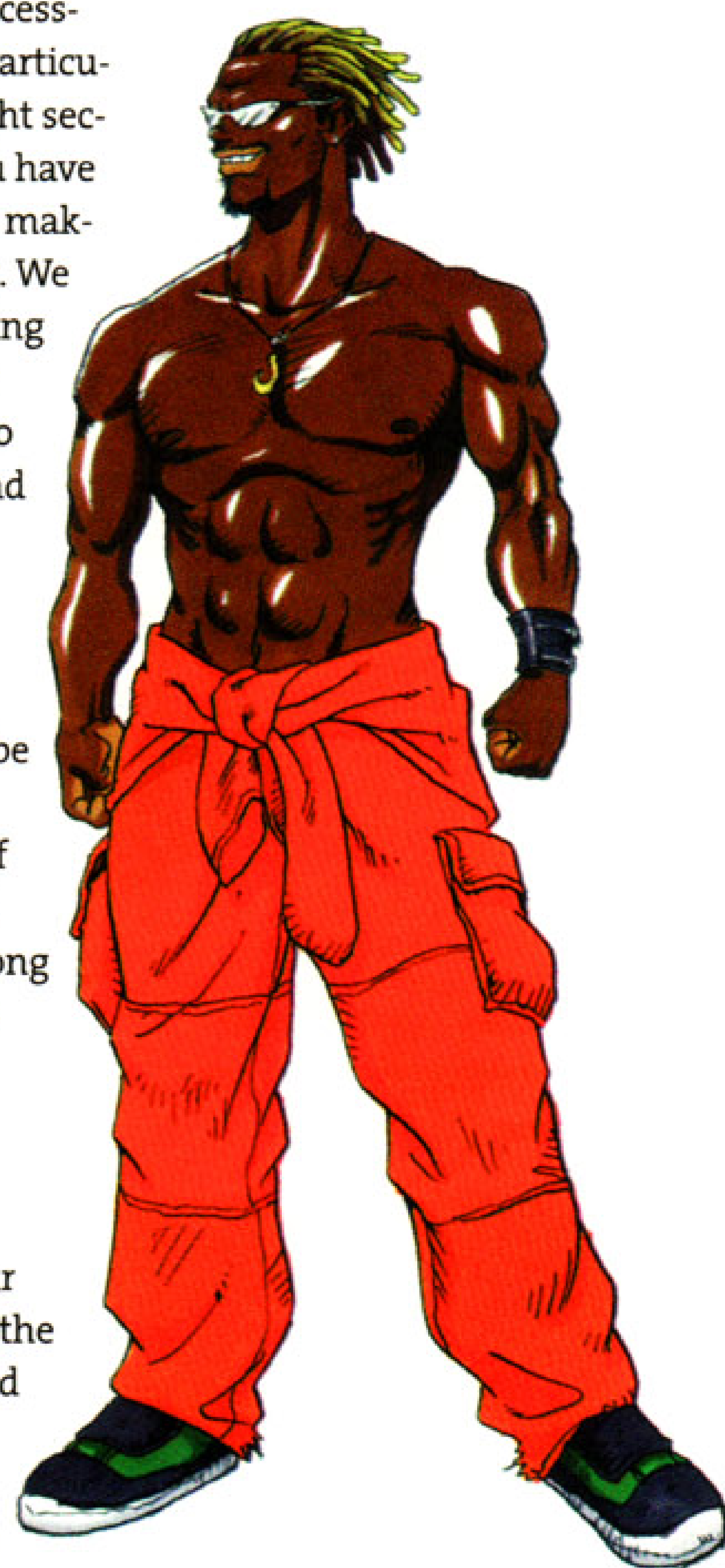
SSM Can you maintain your speed even on the upper route?
AM3 It is possible, if you don't fail. As I mentioned before, you can get a higher speed when you do difficult tricks. Of course there is a limit. As you get faster it becomes more and more difficult for you to maintain your balance. If you fail to do a trick then you'll slow down, but if you succeed then you'll be able to continue moving quickly even when jumping from drum to drum. If you go fast enough the fire wheels appear on-screen.







Okay, so you've completed the beginner course but have you got what it takes to tackle the expert track?


Yo, my man! Tough guy Jake Smith struts his funky stuff, sporting the very latest gear from skate sponsor, Etnies.



Tracks are covered in posters advertising real skate labels.



Yeah, grind those skateboard wheels homeboy!


Ash thinks he's the number one skateboarder in the competition.

SSM What is the difference between the beginner course and the expert course?
AM3 The biggest difference is that the feelings of thrill differ. For instance, in the beginner course you can move freely and easily. It feels great after you've made a big jump into a wide open space. However, the expert course has an underground feel to it and you feel yourself being cramped in. I associate skateboarding with such a space. We wanted to make the course like that. There are a lot of closely arranged oil drums and buildings around the expert course. There isn't a straight and easy route through the course. There are a lot of obstacles such as railings and cones that you might hit against. In the beginner course it's more open and there are jump ramps and low fences. We'd like everyone to choose their favourite course.

SSM Are the tricks you can do on the beginner and expert course the same?
AM3 Yes they are.

SSM Was the Model 2 board fully capable of handling all the 3D algorithms used in Top Skater?
AM3 Yes, we made full use of it.

SSM Does that mean it wasn't necessary to use Model 3 for this type of game?
AM3 This time we attached the most importance to the idea of fun. So we preferred to realise this concept rather than simply improving graphical techniques. We have a lot of know-how about Model 2, so we wanted to create some new enjoyment using the Model 2, not Model 3. Sega has only just started to make use of the Model 3. AM 3 has also begun to form a Model 3 project. However, we don't yet have all the algorithms we would need to do a game like Top Skater. Model 2 is a board we can still use well and which has a loads of software libraries.

SSM With such an active game as skateboarding, didn't you feel that it would be necessary to give some kind of feedback through the skateboard interface?
AM3 It was possible for us to make the users experience the feeling that they were really skateboarding, without using feedback through the skateboard interface. In reality, it would be very difficult to play if we did use feedback.

SSM Top Skater is very much a single player game. Did you ever consider the option of multi-player gaming and linked cabinets?
AM3 If you play a game with another user at the same time you'll always end up trying to beat him and the game ends up as a race. We had preferred a trick game to a race game from the very beginning, so we gave up the idea of a two-player game.

SSM Compared to actual skateboarding how realistic are the tricks in Top Skater?
AM3 Well, those tricks that are based on actual tricks are very real. When you skateboard for real there's a lot of sliding, especially when you're turning. With this as a base, when you input the jumps, the Nollie and Ollie motions are incredibly real as are the real tricks as well. According to the professional skateboarders we talked to, this was very realistically simulated.

SSM How difficult was it to balance the realism and playability of the game?
AM3 Each member of the development staff actually had a go at trying to do the tricks. To tell the truth, none of them had ever skateboarded before. Actually, most of the players haven't either, so bearing in mind that the game is for the users we developed a game which they can play easily. We attached more importance to the images than to the easiness. We maintained a balance between them.

SSM What sort of feedback did you get from the players at the location tests?
AM3 We got a lot of feedback off them. Those people who were interested in street fashion said they tried it because it was a new style of game. They enjoyed playing it because it was a different kind of game from what has been available up to now. They liked the way the game easily responded to the way they played. What we were most worried about was the feedback from the main players of fighting games and shooting games. One player who liked fighting games tried Top Skater just because the characters are designed by the same person who did the Last Bronx characters. He tried Top Skater for the first time and he liked it very much. With the location tests we were able to inspire new users. Although of course there were a few people who had some criticisms, there were a lot of people who were satisfied with the game. Nobody really wanted us to make any changes.

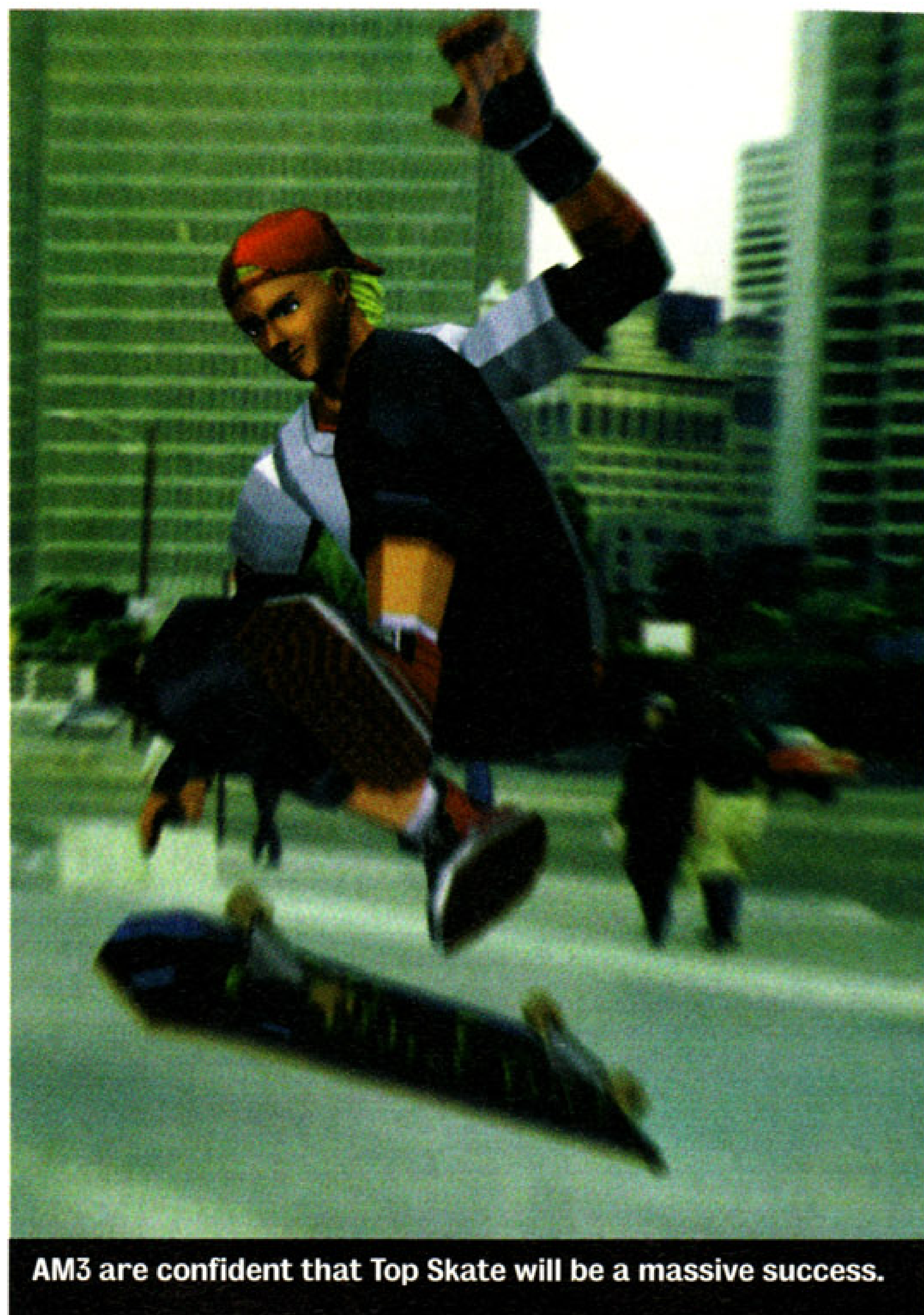
SSM So were you worried about whether the game would be well accepted?
AM3 Before the location test we were nervous, of course. Before the release? Oh, we always feel nervous before a release. We can never know whether the game will do well until it comes out. But our worries were removed by the location test. We felt relieved.

SSM You must have worked very closely with AM4 in order to develop the skateboard interface. Could you please tell us a little bit about your relation with them on this project?
AM3 We usually work with AM4 when creating games. We work together to make a cabinet that will work well with our software. Normally, games such as driving games are soon finished. When you receive the cabinet from AM 4 there's usually only a short exchange, such as "You should improve only this little bit". However, the process



With over 100 complex tricks to master, Top Skater is a real arcade challenge.


Mr Kenji Kanno and Mr Hisao Oguchi discuss the finer points of Top Skater's gameplay.


AM3 are confident that Top Skate will be a massive success.

to design and create the skateboard interface didn't go so smoothly that we were able to get it right in one go. When the player stands on the skateboard it has to be stable and we needed to create a mechanism through which you could enter all the tricks. There was a lot of discussion between us on these points.

SSM At what point during the development process did you consider the design of the skateboard?
AM3 We decided on the design of the skateboard about one month before our first location test. By that time it had already been redesigned several times. We were very nervous because the schedule was very tight. All the tricks had been finished and blended together so it was the first time that it could be played in its complete form. We really liked the final design.

SSM The game's background music has been performed by LA grunge band, Pennywise. How did you find out about them?
AM3 I knew about them long before I decided to use their songs in Top Skater. I like this kind of music such as hard rock and punk.

SSM Why did you decide to use Pennywise for the tunes?
AM3 First of all, a major reason was that the real skateboarding world has three main concepts; music, fashion and sport. They aren't divisible. As for the music, well... there are several genres that skateboarders especially admire. Punk rock is certainly one of them. We were looking for some exciting and upbeat music which would could use to excite the players, so first of all we chose the punk rock genre. After that, we then researched various punk rock artists. We listened to various artists' songs and compared them with the final visual images of the game. We found that Pennywise were the most suitable so we then decided to use their songs. As a matter of fact, Pennywise had been suggested from the very beginning because they are one of the greatest grunge bands around. They have supplied ten songs for Top Skater as well as an exclusive original track.

SSM Are Pennywise a popular band in Japan? Did this influence your decision to approach the group?
AM3 Yes they are and I myself am a very big fan of the group.

SSM How did you create all the special sound effects found in Top Skater?
AM3 We collected samples of the sound effects by doing things like throwing a skateboard around and things like that. However, if you only use sampling for the sound effects, the game sounds noisy. Recording a running skateboard picks up a lot of background noise. So we researched trying to mix different samples together to get the best sound. In the end we partly used real sounds and we partly used artificial sounds.

SSM As you obviously went to a lot of trouble to get Pennywise for the music. How did you ensure that the Top Skater sound system would do them justice?
AM3 We installed fantastic speakers! It was important that we install woofers to emphasise the bass so that the players could really feel the drum beat. We spent a lot of time discussing where the speakers should be installed many times. Now the speakers are installed bare, out in front, and are much better than before. They can reproduce the great sound both for the players' ears and their bodies.

SSM Did you utilise any other special sound hardware?
AM3 Yes, we installed the MPEG board onto the Model 2 board. Financially, we couldn't install them before, but their use is becoming more cost effective. This is the first time we've installed speakers with such a large capacity. I think this will be the trend from now on.

SSM Could you tell us a little about the product sponsors?
AM3 We decided to tie-up with some companies who make real shoes. For example, the Reef shoes are available now. This time we are only tied-up with the shoes. All the character's clothes have been designed by us and are original.

SSM How important and difficult was it to arrange this sponsorship for Top Skater?
AM3 It wasn't that difficult at all. We've tied-up with six companies. Actually, in a real skateboarding competition, professional skateboarders are also tied-up with companies. We thought it was important to express this reality. Even though it's not a real competition, we'd like the users to feel familiar with it. A user might say "Wow, those are Reef shoes! This competition looks real!" That's why we used the real shoes in the game.

SSM Which aspect of Top Skater are you most proud of?
AM3 The thing which I'm most satisfied with is that we've created a space in the arcade where a player, and the people watching him, can communicate together. "Communication" is the policy of our general manager. In the location test, there were a lot of people around the game. They could enjoy watching both the screen and the skateboard. They could communicate there. That's what we're most proud of.

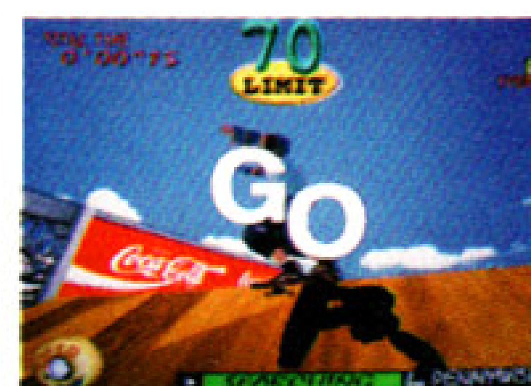
SSM Do you have any plans to port Top Skater to the Saturn?
AM3 To be honest with you, I have no idea. When we decide to port software, we have to research the players' feedback beforehand. For example, after "Virtual On" came out, we got a lot of feedback saying that they wanted to play it on the Sega Saturn. Then we began to discuss if it was possible to do it. So we don't know whether we'll make a Sega Saturn Top Skater until we get the users' feedback.

SSM Do you think that it's possible to play Top Skater on the Sega Saturn with only a pad?
AM3 We worked on this project with a policy "Do it before you think about it. Nobody can tell the result beforehand." We've been taking a positive attitude, but we can't say what the possibility is now. No matter what you try to attempt, the possibility never becomes zero. There might be a possibility but we'll have to investigate it first.

SSM Do you have a message for all your fans in the UK?
AM3 Well, take a shot at it! The game will always respond exactly to your control. Just try it and experiment with Top Skater in different ways and I'm sure you'll find your own favourite way of enjoying it.



By using the skateboard peripheral, players pull off real life stunts and tricks.





As the arcade version of Top Skater was powered by Sega's Model 2 board, will this supreme title appear on Saturn? AM3 want your feedback now!



Breaking away from the deluge of 2D beat 'em ups we usually reserve for this section, Big In Japan this month focuses on Touge King The Spirits 2, a grammatically incorrect driving game. Already available in Japan, the game focuses more on realism than arcade-like thrills and could well prove to be a surprise hit. Well hoorah for that!

KING THE SPIRITS 2

BY	ATLAS
STYLE	DRIVING
ORIGIN	SEQUEL
RELEASE	OUT NOW (JAPAN)



The replay mode allows players to view the entire race from cool camera angles with rewind and fast forward facilities.

SEASONED GAMERS

Though only three different courses have been made available, the appearance of each track changes dramatically when the seasons, time of day and also the varying weather conditions are altered. For example, in the Winter season the roadside scenery is covered in a blanket of snow as opposed to the greenery fest of the summer season. Icy patches are to avoided and visibility is poor.



Tracks look radically different when the seasons are varied.



Regular readers of Sega Saturn Magazine may remember a small article we once ran on the original King of Spirits sometime around the back end of 1995. The game was a fairly decent racer but looked quite dated graphically in comparison with the awesome Daytona USA and Sega Rally. So, despite its large following in Japan, King of Spirits failed to see the light of the day on these shores. However, undeterred by the lack of a European market for their game, developer Atlas went on to produce a sequel to the aforementioned racer, the rather bizarrely titled Touge King The Spirits 2. Taking on board the criticisms levelled at the first game the sequel promises to be a superior beast. And yet again the Japanese are going crazy over it.

JUST ANOTHER RACING GAME?

Touge King The Spirits 2 is clearly made from a similar mould as The Need For Speed with the emphasis being more on a driving simulation than a straightforward racing game. As a result the TKS2 is laden with a comprehensive range of options giving the players plenty of opportunity to tinker around with virtually every conceivable aspect of the game. To begin with, a choice of three different courses are available to race on which are playable in both a clockwise and an anti-clockwise direction. This effectively doubles the number of tracks as radically different racing lines are needed for the corners when racing in a different direction. As for the courses themselves, they appear to be attempting to mimic Namco's Ridge Racer series as there is clear similarities





between the two. The courses are of a tight and twisty mountainous nature with steep dips and inclines and tight tunnel sections allowing players little margin for error. Once the course is selected, players are able to adjust various elements which greatly alter the appearance of each track. The time of day, the weather and even the seasons are adjustable with the track side scenery changing accordingly. For example in the winter season the scenery is covered in a blanket of snow as opposed to the greenery-fest of the summer time. However, the latter options are included for purely cosmetic reasons and fail to have any impact on how the game itself plays.

A range of 20 different cars have been programmed into the game which are fully customisable allowing players the opportunity to construct their ultimate dream machine. Begin by selecting the colour of your chosen vehicle, before moving on to choose an engine, brake set-up, steering, muffler, suspension and even the tyres. Not all of these are instantly available however, as players have to work towards attaining some of the top-of-the range equipment.







Whoa! Watch out for the fences by the side of the track.









The variable weather conditions allow for foggy courses, reducing visibility to a negligible distance. Ahhh!

Made from a similar mould as The Need For Speed, the emphasis is more on realism than the arcade-like thrills of more conventional racers

THE TWO-PLAYER MODE

Onto the race proper and Touge King The Spirits 2 gives players several different modes of play from time trial to a free-drive mode and an excellent split-screen two-player mode allowing players to compete against a human opponent. The split-screen option is surprisingly good with two variations meaning that either a horizontal or vertical split-screen is viewed putting it one up on Sega Rally. Both views are very playable with no noticeable loss of frame rate or bad clipping being evident.

WORTH THE IMPORT COSTS?

However play the one player game itself and it soon becomes clear that Touge King The Spirits 2 isn't the sequel it could well have been if a little more thought had gone into it. For starters there's only a paltry single opponent to race against, which is quite a fundamental flaw in a game that even the most ignorant of developers should have been able to spot. There's no jostling for position or crafty overtaking manoeuvres to be found here, instead witness endless sequences of solo racing. Clearly gameplay was an afterthought rather than an integral part of the game. Graphically Touge King The Spirits 2 is a bit of a letdown, failing to improve on the obvious shortcomings of its predecessor and looking quite dated alongside Sega's own selection of racing titles. The draw distance is quite poor in parts with huge chunks of scenery popping up out of nowhere, Daytona Sonic wall-style. It's clear from the finished Japanese version that Atlus have used the same basic engine as the prequel and failed to take any notice of the wave of criticism levelled at it.

It remains very unlikely that Sega will bother to sign up Touge King The Spirits 2 despite its success in The Land of the Rising Sun. It just goes to show that not all fads that emerge over there translate well over here. To be honest this game is best left alone and certainly not worth the extortionate amount of money importers will probably charge.









These shots demonstrate the hilly nature of the courses.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

Touge King The Spirits 2 is one of the few driving games to be compatible with Sega's much vaunted analogue control. Control with the standard digital pad is difficult to say the least with power slides being a virtual impossibility. However, plug in the analogue controller and power slides are made a tad simpler allowing players to negotiate the twistier tracks with far more competence.



On certain sections of the track, the car leaves the ground.



Exact change needed as you reach the tight toll booth section.



Snow-capped mountains abound in the winter season.

JONAH LOMU RUGBY

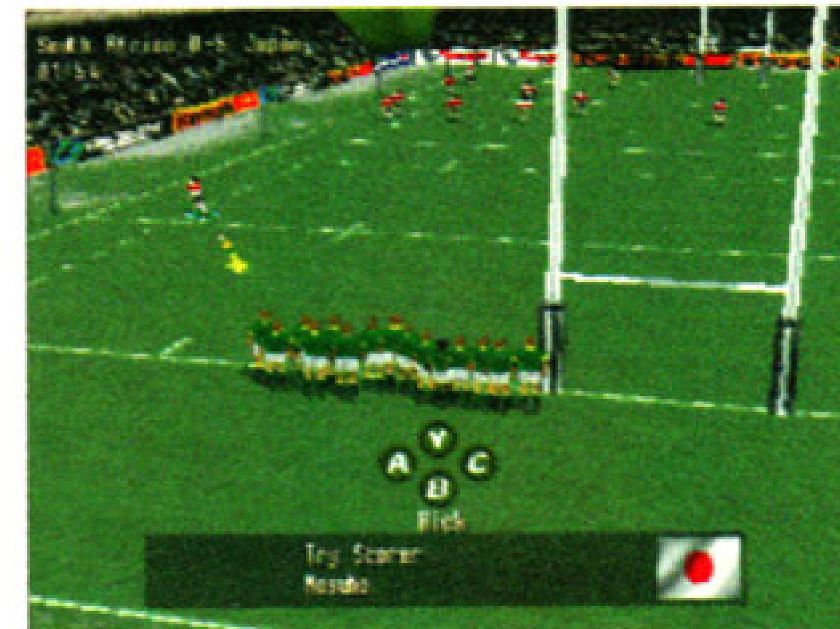
Codemasters have been a little quiet since their Megadrive golden years but now they're back with world's first 32-bit rugby simulation. Forget American Football, soccer and basketball, the monster of all sports games is ready to tackle the Saturn!

BY	CODEMASTERS
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	RUGBY
RELEASE	OUT NOW





The intelligent camera angles add greatly to the experience.



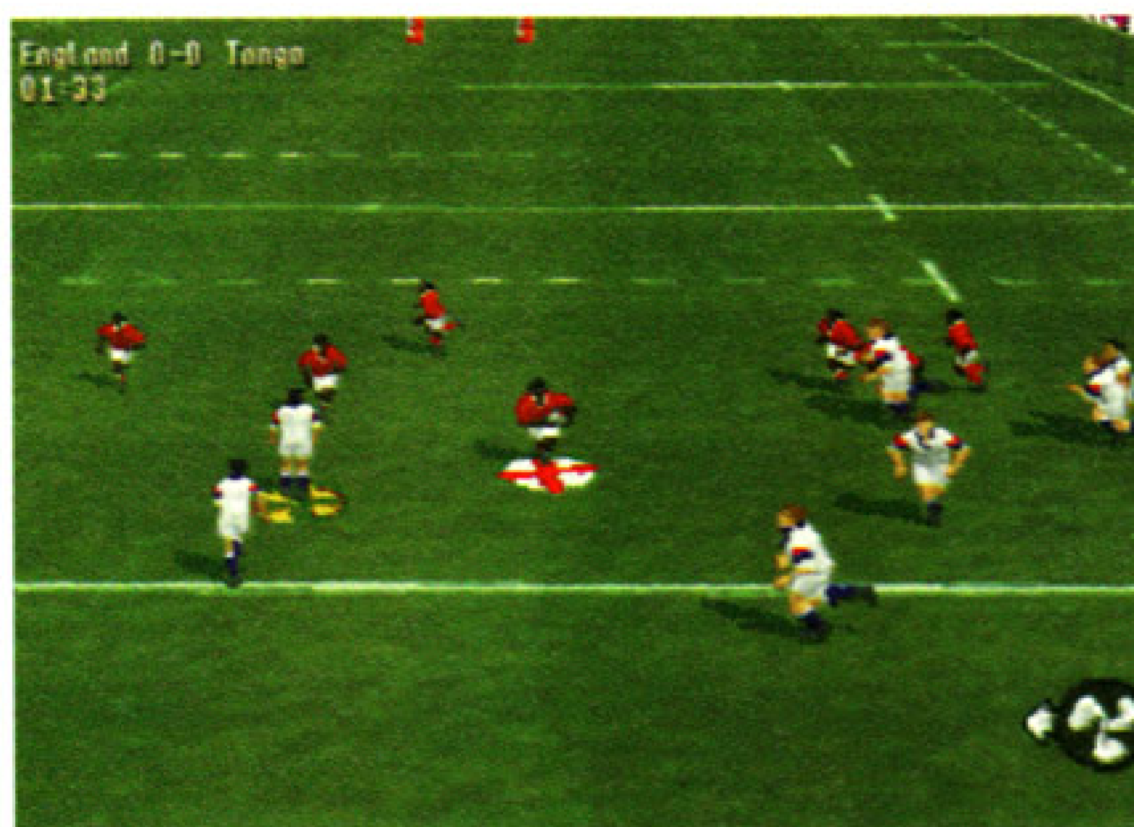


And he's off with the ball.



Here's a nice replay.







Another running play here.



Closing in for the try...

When confronted with 19 stone of pure muscle, most grown men would have the sense to step out of the way. When that muscle belongs to the man-mountain known as Jonah Lomu, you either move or get turned into mincemeat. With an established reputation as rugby's rising star, New Zealand born All-Blacks player Jonah has now turned his sights to the world of interactive entertainment. By teaming up with Warwickshire based gaming gurus Codemasters, Jonah is lending his significant bulk and image to a sports title that takes team play and excitement to fever pitch levels.

While there are certainly plenty of superb Saturn sports games to choose from, no developer has ever produced a title based on the UK's second most popular sport. So, while EA may have the football market sewn up with endless FIFA sequels, Codemasters have carved out their own substantial sporting niche with the likes of Brian Lara Cricket and Pete Sampras Tennis. Of course, Jonah Lomu Rugby represents a completely unique challenge and, I'm happy to say, that Codies, and programmers Rage Software, have pulled off an amazing job yet again.

If you're completely unfamiliar with the world of scrums, trys and converted goals then worry not. Jonah Lomu Rugby features one of the most innovative and easy to use game play systems ever utilised in a sports game. For starters, beginners are eased into the game via a series of friendly matches, allowing players to select from one of 30 professional teams and play a single match in one of four stadiums. Further game options now present themselves, such as variable weather conditions and time limits,

Jonah is lending his significant bulk and image to a sports title that takes team play and excitement to fever pitch levels.



Jonah's super-easy-to-pick-up control system allows for a huge degree of flexibility.



The polygon players allow for some decent level of realism, and the speed doesn't seem to suffer.







The PlayStation game has received rave reviews and this Saturn title is just as good.



Jonah Lomu follows the fad for digitised commentators by having words of wisdom from Bill McClaren and Bill Beaument.

before the game begins proper. The stop-start nature of rugby actually works in a player's favour during a match, allowing trainee Bill Beaumonts to access a number of on-screen menus which simplify potentially confusing rugby rules. For instance, when both teams are locked in a scrum, there's often a mad scramble for the ball. However, thanks to Jonah Lomu's unique control system, players have the option to add extra team members to the scrum, push against the opposing side or simply make a quick grab for the ball. Of course, as more experience is gained, players soon find themselves tapping through these gameplay options at a frightening pace thereby increasing the speed of matches. The result is a game with a near perfect learning curve and one which allows both short decisive matches to be played as well as lengthy tournaments.

While HudsonSoft may be the king of multi-player games, Codemasters come a very close second. The same company that pioneered the innovative MegaDrive J-Cart have ensured that Jonah's team appeal naturally extends to additional players. With the aid of a multi-tap, two-on-two matches become available, enhancing the team spirit of the game. Although it's not possible to have four players on one team, these two-on-two sessions do become just as competitive. On the audio side, Jonah Lomu Rugby's commentary also plays an essential part in the game as both Bill McClaren and Bill Beaumont offer handy advice to bumbling players but also criticise poor gameplay. Likewise the game's dramatic weather conditions enhance the atmosphere with gentle, whistling breezes turning into full on gales and light rain showers drowning stadiums, turning green turf to slippery mud.

Rugby isn't exactly mass market (yet) but with the right marketing push, and the kind of scores that this superb Saturn sports title is guaranteed to receive, Jonah Lomu Rugby deserves to be as big a hit as its namesake.

MATT YEO





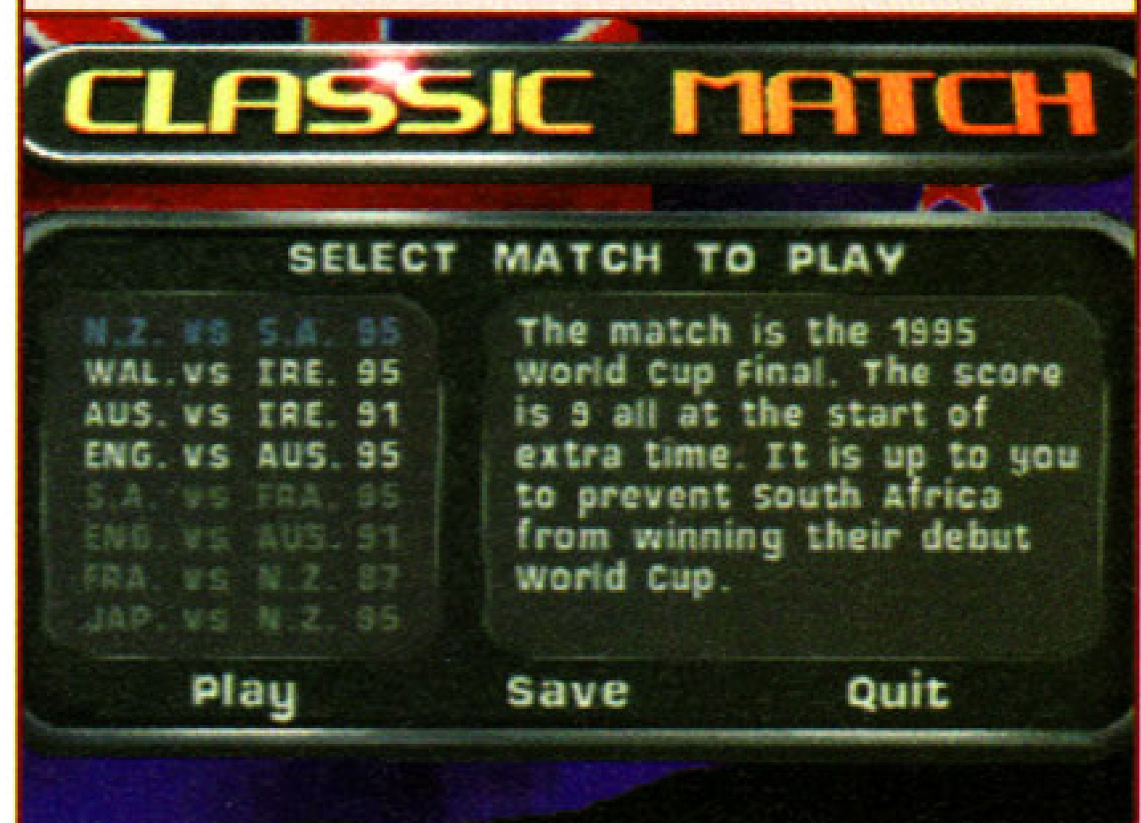
It has to be said that after the heinous debacle that was Doom we never thought we'd welcome a Rage Software project, but both Jonah Lomu and EA's Darklight are looking great.

STATS YER LOT!

Jonah Lomu Rugby boasts plenty of player and game statistics. Pausing the game provides access to the main stat menu and from here players wade through such specific match information as the number of possessions a team has obtained as well as territory gained, lineouts won, penalties conceded and much more. Other options allow players to select multiple camera angles and the nifty action replay option...









I think we can all guess what's going on here.



Two more in-game shots of this great sports sim.

Incredibly playable, thoroughly enjoyable and a superb 32-bit sports simulation. Jonah's done us proud.

graphics	92
sound	85
playability	90
lastability	87

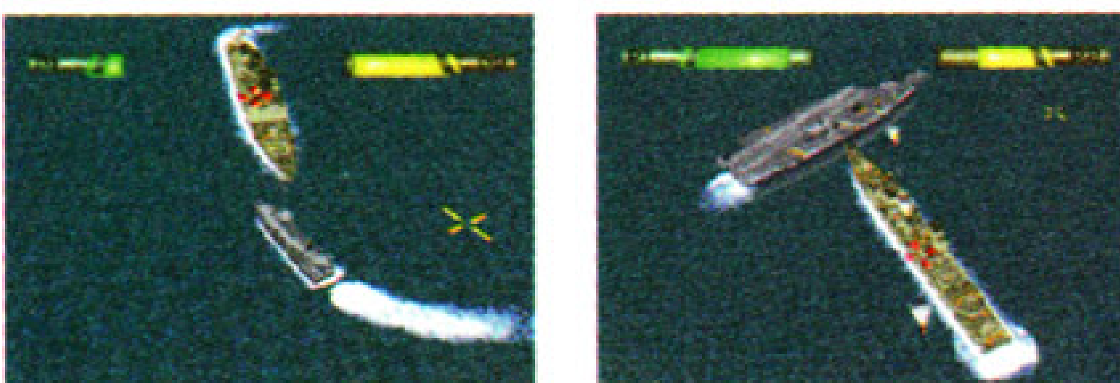
overall **91%**

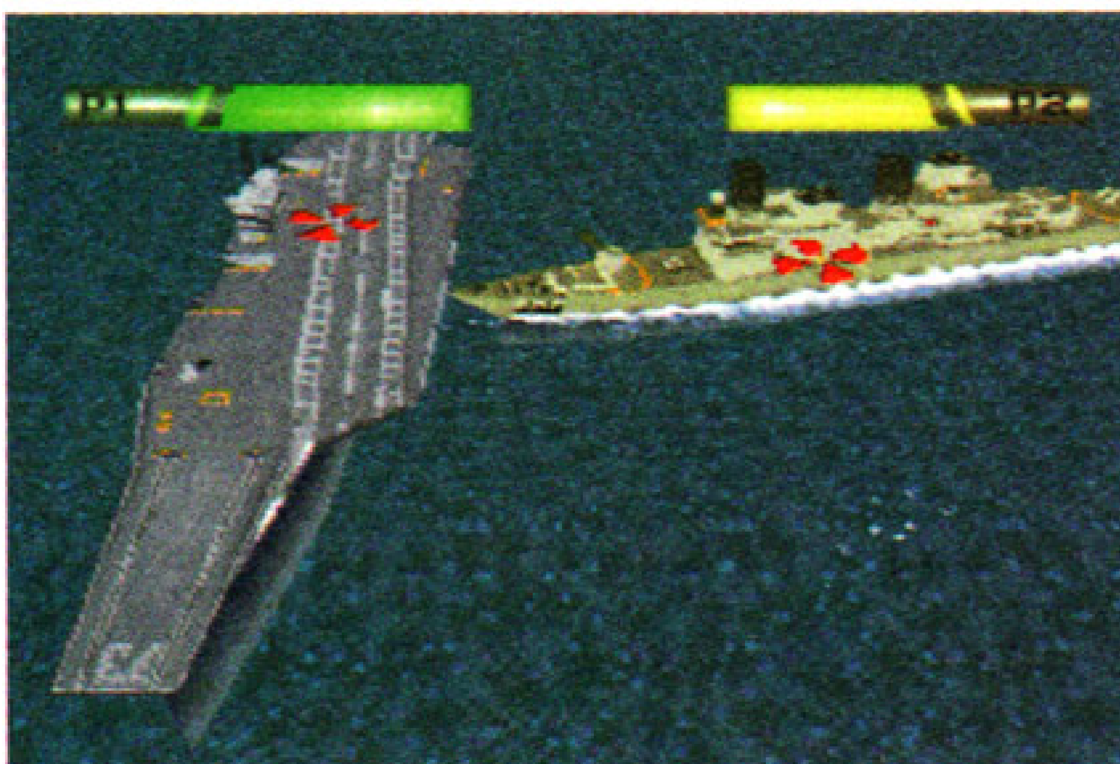
REVIEW

BATTLE STATIONS

Experience all the fun of being in the Navy from the comfort of your own bedroom, fortunately avoiding the jokes about what those men get up to behind closed portholes.

BY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	STRATEGY/SHOOTER
RELEASE	JUNE









Battlestations, being based loosely around the battleships board game, doesn't have much of a plot to it. It's just a good, old fashioned game, like the ones your parents used to play in the olden days, back in a time when folk were simple enough to have their attention held for hours on end by small pieces of wood and paper.

Of course we now live in a more modern society, where children only use wooden toys and paper to help them ignite buildings, and games these days must be electronic, colourful, flash and above all, you kill things. Electronic Arts have noticed this shift away from traditional games, towards the more visually stunning multimedia entertainment world, and they've therefore decided to give us a more exciting, thrilling and dynamic version of the classic Battle Ships board game.

However, upon first playing this Saturn game, it's not immediately obvious where EA have hidden all the exciting, thrilling and dynamic elements, because the only content I could find on the disc, despite repeated attempts, was a rather dull and tedious exercise in random button pressing.

The game has a choice between Arcade and Campaign modes, with the Arcade mode being an incredibly simplistic one-on-one battle against a computer or human foe, but the chances of being able to convince an able bodied and mentally sound person to play this game (except for review purposes of course), are pretty slim indeed. Playing against the Saturn in Arcade mode really is just a matter of vaguely waggling the d-pad and hammering the shoot button. Admiral Nelson must be turning in his grave.

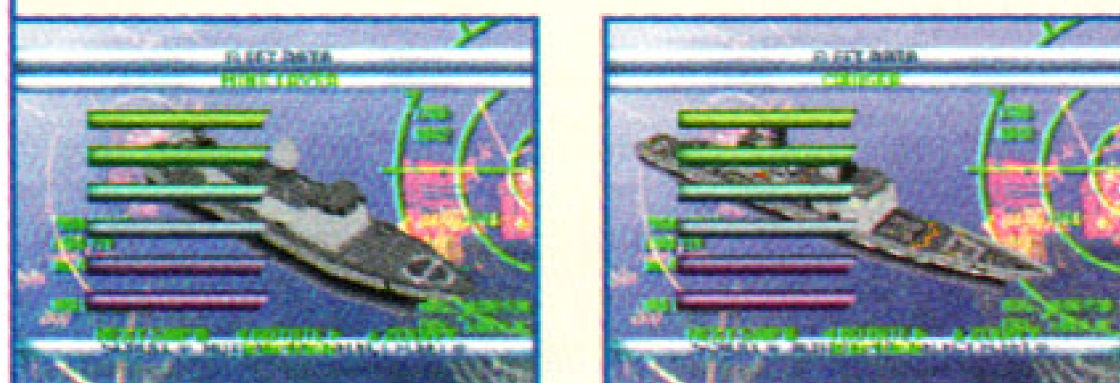
The campaign mode at least contains a bit more to hold your interest - steer your selected ship around a 2D map until you find an enemy vessel, and engage it in battle, hoping to achieve a set objective. The resulting fight sequence looks fairly decent to be honest, with some nicely detailed 3D ships battling it out for



Oooh... looks like quite a pitched battle here eh?

WHEN THE SHIP HITS THE FAN

There's a decent range of ocean-going craft that can be controlled during the game. Basically they divide into three categories - small and manoeuvrable like the Patrol boat, larger missile launchers such as the subs and Destroyers, and the big, slow Aircraft Carrier. The humble Patrol boat can destroy most of the opposition though, but later missions do need some strategic use of the larger and more specialised ships.







The campaign mode offers the most thrills in Battle Stations.



Captioning these screenshots is becoming most repetitive. Like the game.



Missiles away! And we have a direct hit.





Ships that pass in the night... or the day, it would seem.



A bit of flank to flank action shown right here.

A few good ideas in there, but shockingly bad presentation and amazingly simple gameplay should help this to sink like the Titanic.

oceanic supremacy. The only problem with this section is the complete lack of reality. You can control a massive Aircraft Carrier for example, and simply holding down the D-Pad in one direction makes your ship spin around on the spot. I suppose a totally realistic simulation where it would take 12 hours to come to a halt would be even less exciting, but this game would definitely benefit from a slight increase in realism.

Another example of the mind-bending qualities contained within this game is the way that a humble Patrol boat can move around very quickly, avoiding the sights of the Aircraft Carrier, and just by repeatedly firing off weapons and going around in circles, the mighty Aircraft Carrier can be sunk by the tiny Patrol boat! A touching play on the old David and Goliath tale, and a great example of the little person struggling against massive odds to beat the evil system, but it doesn't really make for an exciting piece of Saturn software.

There are some signs of inspiration hidden in there though - the larger ships can launch helicopters and fighter 'planes to attack the enemy, but since each confrontation is over so quickly, the easiest way to achieve victory is simply to pound the standard guns and hope the enemy sinks before you do. Another wasted opportunity sees you able to captain a submarine, but since the sub controls in exactly the same way and has the same features as the normal ships, what's the point? The vast majority of battles between large ships end up with the two stuck side-by-side, and just exchanging fire until one of them is destroyed. Even when ships do explode, there's hardly the sort of destruction you might expect - a terrible white block appears around the stricken vessel to signify it's about to sink, and the ship is engulfed in some curious clouds of orange and yellow blocks, probably similar to how Picasso would make an abstract artistic representation of 'Fire'.

Of course, the game isn't completely without merit... but it comes quite close.

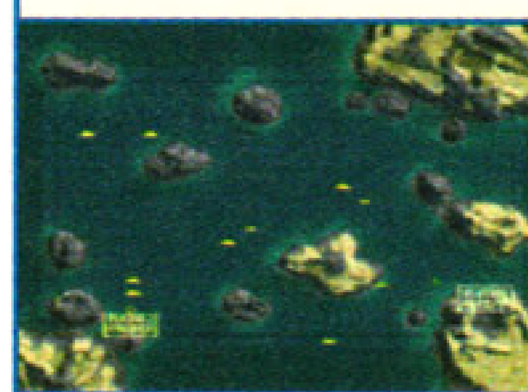


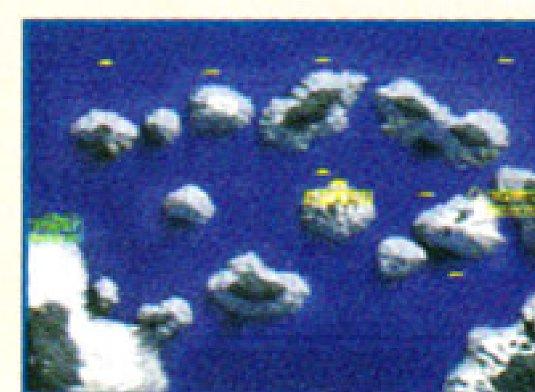
Battle Stations really is a quite, quite bizarre game.

GARY CUTLACK

WE'LL TAKE THEM FROM BEHIND, SIR!

Of course, this is supposed to be a strategy game, so you would expect to see a large number of rather-boring-but-technically-essential-screens, which would allow you to plan your cunning precision attack on the enemy. You decide which ships to engage in battle, and can move your fleet to strategic locations or into battle, via these rather-boring-but-technically-essential-screens which are pictured here:





This is the strategy bit, as shown with the aid of these two pictures of the 2D map in the game.

IN THE NAVY... LA LA LA LAAAAH!

Unlike the real Navy, the sailors in this game don't spend all their time drinking, smoking, fighting the locals, and hanging around in the showers washing each others backs, instead they're expected to fight for Queen and Country in some dangerous campaigns around the world, and for many of them, alas, the sad yet inevitable face of death stares these young men in the eye.







More campaign mode activities shown above here.

After the triumphant Soviet Strike it comes as a grave disappointment to announce that this is poor. A very shallow (ouch!) ocean-based title that should be avoided.

graphics	55
sound	50
playability	40
lastability	60
overall	49%

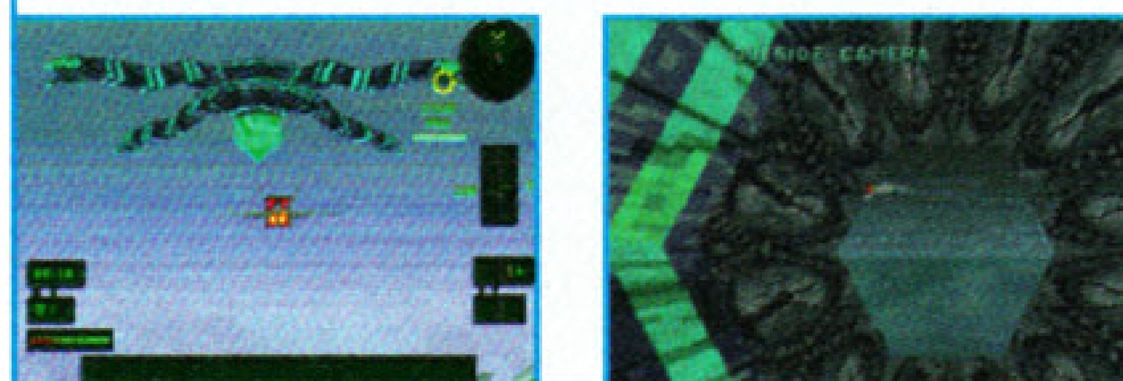
INDEPENDENCE DAY

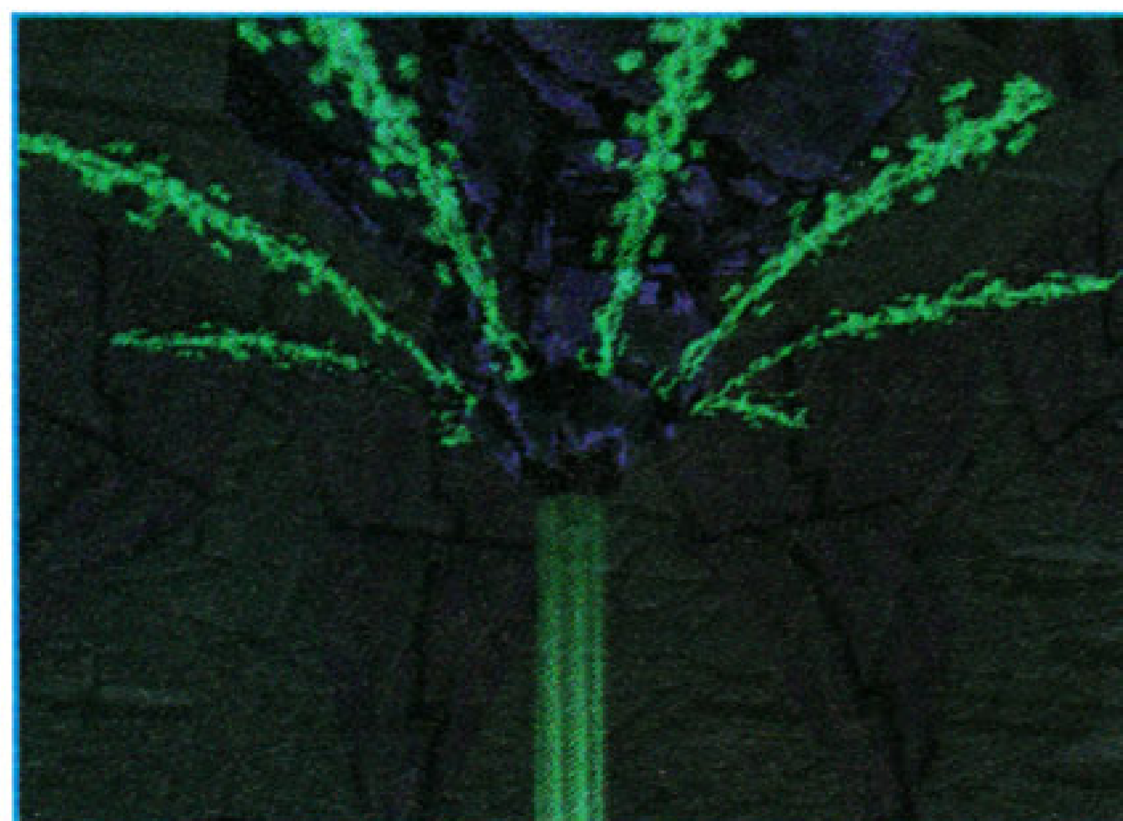
Time's up! Nearly a year after Independence Day exploded onto cinema screens around the world, EA finally unleash their big licensed 3D shoot 'em up. So tell us hotshots, are you ready to "whup ET's ass"?

BY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	OUT NOW

WARP FACTOR 4

On certain levels, players access random warp-gates that lead to special bonus stages. The sites for these secret stages are Cape Canaveral, the Nakhoda Sub Base and the Antarctic. Entering a bonus stage offers players the chance to collect extra power-ups and destroy a heavily guarded alien shield generator. With limited time limit and hordes of fighters to dodge, players are best advised to get out ASAP.





Failure to destroy the alien ship's shield generators results in the invaders unleashing their powerful weapons.



Players fly their craft from a number of camera angles, with the in-cockpit view displaying all-important mission data.

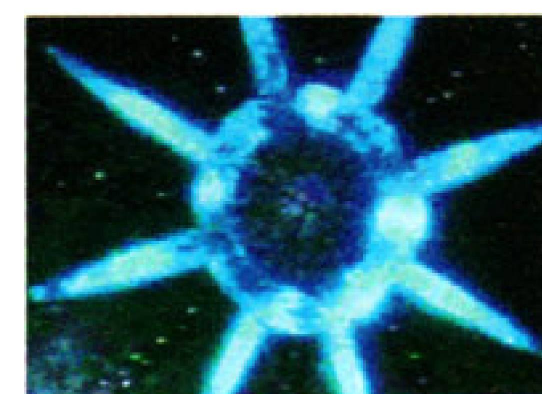


Believe it or not, this is Paris. Can't you just smell that garlic?





They come in piece...



...and shoot to kill!

The world of licensed movie games has always been a shaky one to say the least. By wooing film companies with big bucks, and the promise of sticking true to a creator's celluloid vision, video game developers usually assume they've bagged a sure fire hit. However, long lead times and a lack of studio support often result in software houses releasing half-baked titles that only bear a passing resemblance to what audiences remember watching on the big screen.

Such is the case with Fox Interactive's Independence Day. The worldwide success of ID4 was so phenomenal that a movie-to-console conversion was inevitable. Unfortunately, while the film's big budget special effects and basic popcorn plot may have filled cinema seats in the summer of '96, the Saturn game of the same name is lifeless and unexciting. For a start, Fox Interactive have taken a number of liberties with the movie's plot, focusing completely on the action-based sections of the film. Players take on the role of a brave fighter pilot accompanying Captain Steve Hiller (played by Will Smith) and fly a variety of aircraft against invading alien forces. Missions are set within 13 forcefield enclosed zones ranging from the neon-lit streets of Tokyo to the top secret airbase known as Area 51. The alien's mile-wide ships have positioned themselves over the planet's capital cities and are preparing to wipe out humanity in one final, devastating assault. In order to stop this extraterrestrial menace once and for all, players need to knock out a set number of shield generators or enemy ships before progressing to the next stage.

To add further depth to what could have been a basic Afterburner-style shoot 'em up, Fox have added

While there's plenty of action and enemies on-screen, a low frame rate and scruffy texture maps give the game a rather shabby appearance.



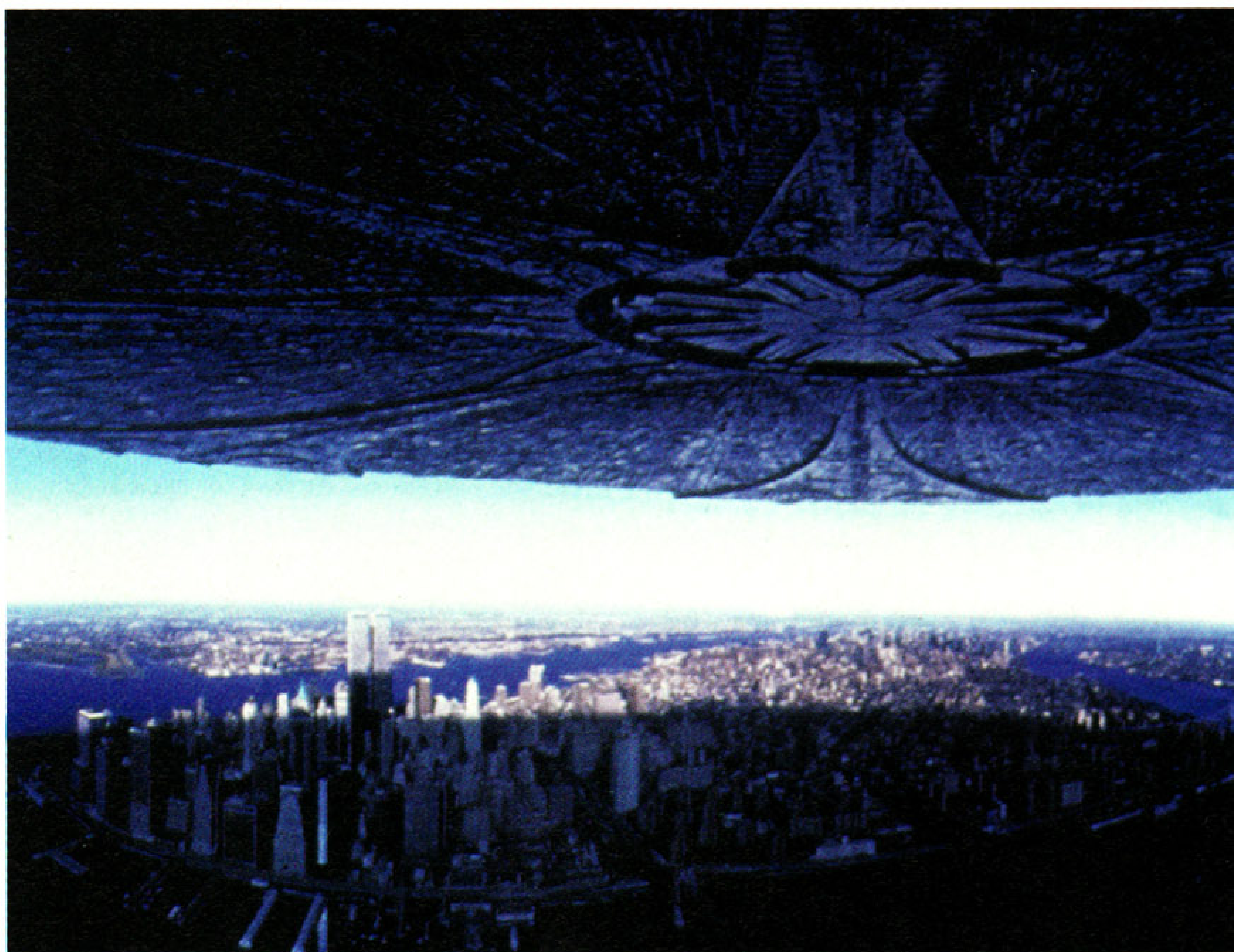
Extensive exploration of each level reveals hidden icons, adding secret fighters and craft to a player's inventory. Can you find the elusive alien fighter?







Game over, pal! Tough later levels prove a challenge even for the best pilots.


The movie event of '96. Independence Day was a massive money spinner but the Saturn game is a real letdown. Worra waste.

a couple of multi-player options in an effort to boost the game's limited lifespan. Both split-screen and link-up modes are accessible although the head-to-head option does suffer from some noticeable slowdown. Likewise, the link cable approach is a welcome addition although the argument of whether players can be bothered to lug their Saturn and a spare TV round to their mates house may mean this particular option is one that few players will ever test out.

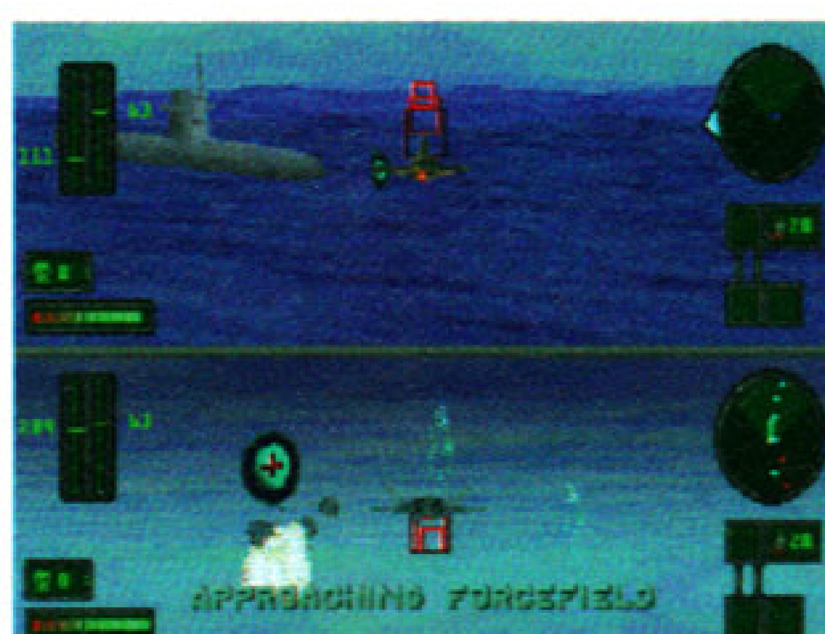
Each fighter craft comes equipped with the same standard weaponry, including heat-seeking missiles and chainguns, although zones are littered with a number of useful power-ups which provide emergency energy boosts as well as other bonuses. The trick to successfully completing each stage lies in following your ship's on-board radar and taking out shield generators and targets as swiftly as possible. Of course these missions are hampered by swarms of attacking alien fighters and numerous ground based batteries taking potshots at your aircraft so some seat-of-the-pants flying is usually required. With the clock ticking away, players must knock out their targets before destroying the City Destroyer's primary weapon.

Now this may sound like ID4 has all the makings of a top quality title yet these elements consistently fail to gel. While there's plenty of action and enemies on-screen, a low frame rate and scruffy texture maps give the game a rather shabby appearance. Likewise the repetitiveness of each mission results in players settling into an unimaginative pattern of shooting and dodging aliens. But the biggest disappointment is that Fox Interactive now have a major blot on their otherwise unstained reputation. Both Alien Trilogy and Die Hard Trilogy were superb titles but these were programmed by Probe and as such seem to have undergone stricter quality control. With ID4, developer Radical Entertainment have obviously had their hands tied and have produced a decidedly average 3D shoot em up .

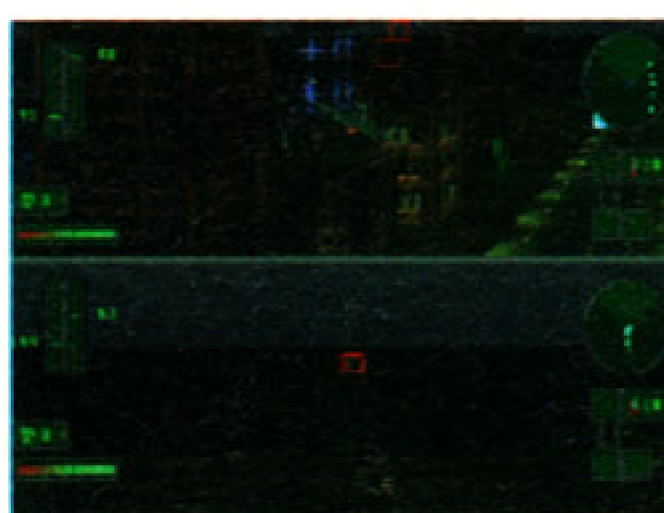
MATT YEO



Ah yes, the "handy" missile camera angle. Not exactly the best view to play ID4 from but it's certainly original.







LET'S SPLIT

The split-screen option offers two hotshot fighter pilots the opportunity to blast away at each other in a head-to-head aerial dogfight. There are four cities to battle over with players required to locate and destroy the other. A set number of kills is determined before the game begins and skillful pilots are those that survive the high altitude encounter. The head-to-head mode also enables players to fly any of ID4's ten fighter craft, usually only available by collecting hidden icons in the main game.








Earth 1, Aliens 0. Another victory for man over mutant.





Yet another average movie licensed game that offers very little variety, excitement or challenge. Best avoided.

graphics	53
sound	64
playability	61
lastability	55

overall

59%

ACTUA SOCCER CLUB EDITION

Yep, you can tell the summer is on the way by the steady stream of soccer titles that are being rolled out, the latest of which is Gremlin's Actua Soccer Club Edition. But is good enough to beat WWS at its own game?

BY	GREMLIN
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SOCCER SIM
RELEASE	JUNE





The all-important victory taunts have made it into the game.

RETURN OF THE GREMLIN

Despite primarily producing games for the PlayStation last year, due to the success of their Saturn conversions Gremlin have seen sense and are focussing a lot more attention on their Saturn games. Actua Soccer Club Edition is the first in a series of games Gremlin have in store for Saturn owners, among them a much requested footy manager game. Yep, we all know how popular such titles are on the PC and Amiga, so Gremlin's Premiere Manager '97 could well turn out to be one of this year's surprise hits. Due out some time this summer, we'll have more on this over the coming months. I promise.



Football fans are well catered for on the Saturn, although if truth be known there's only one essential purchase which is Sega's awesome Worldwide Soccer '97. How it will fare with the inevitable deluge of soccer sims likely to arrive in time for the World Cup next year is anyone's guess. But for the moment it appears to have the market pretty much sewn up. However threatening to throw a spanner in the works is Gremlin's Actua Soccer Club Edition. Although essentially a rehash of the old Euro '96 game, it boasts the same level of playability but now with all-new teams. Could be interesting.

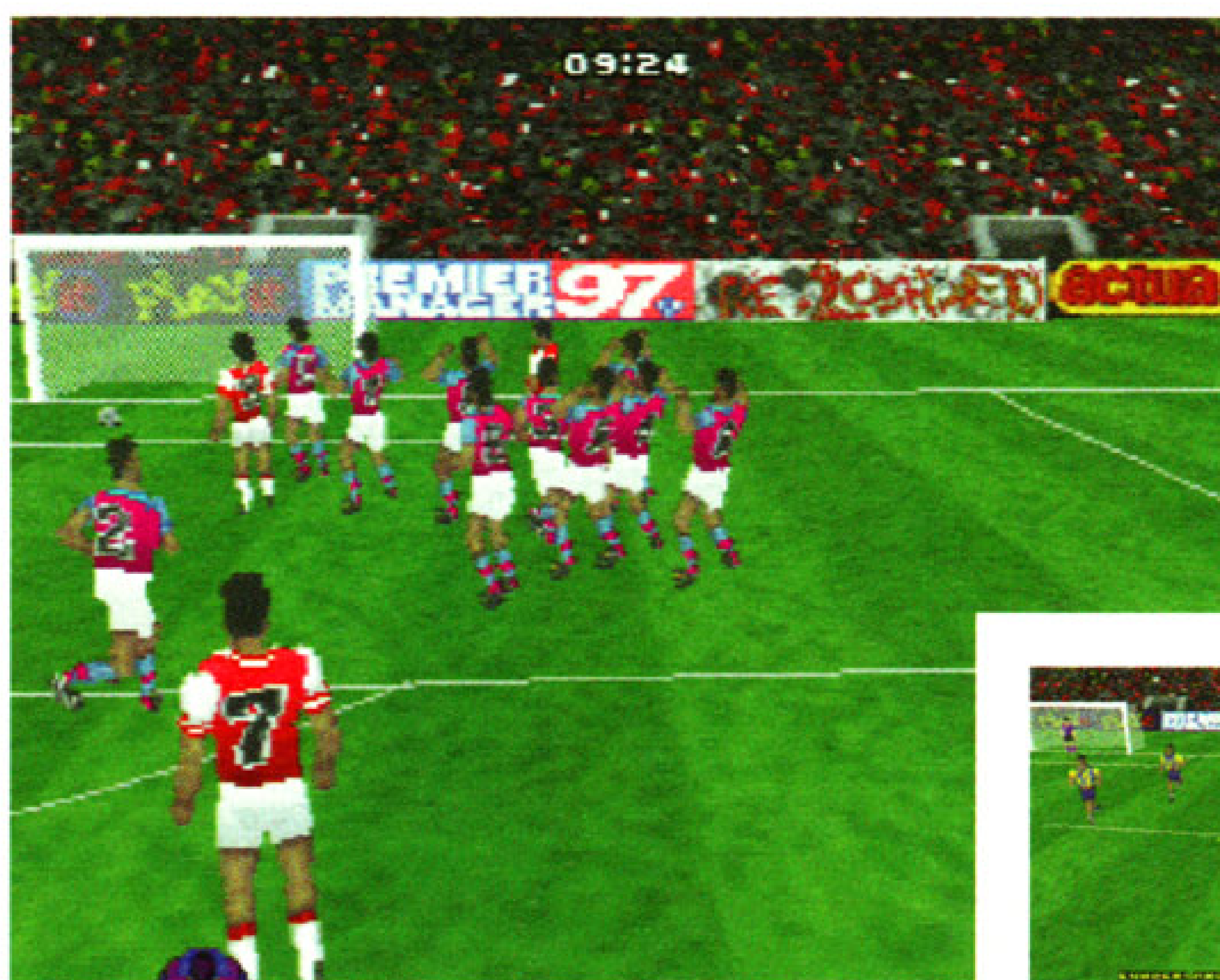
As is the norm with soccer titles these days, Gremlin have stuffed Actua Soccer Club Edition full of options to ensure enough gameplay variations to keep you coming back for more. Three different modes of play have been included, practice, friendly and season. Practice is a knock around with only your team on the field, friendly is a one-off match whereas the season is a gruelling trip through every match fixture of the season. Naturally with this being the club edition, all the European club sides of Euro '96 have been removed with the real Premiership teams being put in their place. There's around twenty of them in total each with the most up to date player listings allowing you to make the necessary changes to your squad, casting aside old has beens to make way for new blood. Then it's time to talk tactics with the option to alter your team strategy to suit your particular playing style. Whether it's to get more players up field to hammer in the goals or adopt a more defensive role with a stronger midfield and defence. The choice is yours.





Once you've selected your team, it's onto the game set up where the option is there to enable you to tinker with the game mechanics. Turn off the offside rule, free kicks and bookings, alter the game length, wind speed and even select the referee. I could go on, suffice to say there's an adequate list of options to appeal to football fanatics who like their game to be as close to the real thing as possible. Gremlin have even reenlisted the commentating services of Match of the Day's Barry Davies to lend his

Although essentially a rehash of Euro '96, Actua Soccer Club Edition boasts the same level of playability but with the all-new Premiership teams.



"Another goal!" as Barry Davies might say. But probably not.



The touchline camera in all its glory.





With the season over, the teams are going to be out of date.









The range of camera angles is impressive but fairly ineffective.

It is clear that Gremlin have attempted to make the game as close to the real thing, even reenlisting the commentating services of Barry Davies.

vocals to the game, giving it a more authentic feel. There's also a fairly impressive range of camera angles that have been included from which to view the game. From the overhead plan view to the touch line camera, the range is quite impressive. It's just a shame that half of them are largely unplayable due to their awkward positioning.

However whilst this may suffice for anal football fanatics hell bent on playing with real teams and real players, the truth of the matter is that ASCE plays like a dog. I defy anyone of sound mind to play WWS '97 for five minutes and ever want to return to this again. The gameplay is so very slow and subdued as opposed to the fast-paced game it ought to be. Whilst the controls are fairly tight they're far from user friendly, meaning relatively simple manoeuvres are a real chore. Diagonal crosses are a virtual impossibility, which invariably lead to frustration and frayed tempers all round. Graphically ASCE fails to exploit the true potential of the Saturn, looking quite rough in places and lacking the overall polish and refinement we associate with Sega's own title. Possibly the biggest gripe I have with ASCE however, is the fact that very little has been changed from its Euro '96 incarnation. The front end screens, team and player names have been altered accordingly but little if anything else to justify the price point. I just hope that Actua 2, due out later this year is a significant improvement, otherwise Gremlin could be heading down the road of mediocrity with that too.





The bottom line is that Actua Soccer Club Edition is a mildly playable soccer sim which lacks the speed, playability and overall polish of Sega's seemingly untouchable WWS '97. Your money is best spent elsewhere.

LEE NUTTER



Pagan dancing is rife on the pitch with much slapping of thighs.



In the year 2020, footballers are identical clones of each other.

IT TAKES TWO...

Despite the AI in Actua being of a good standard, it can never compete with an infinitely variable and unpredictable human opponent. Two-player battles are always more fun than playing against a CPU opponent, especially when you're able to play as your favourite teams. Whether you're continuing the long running Manchester United vs Newcastle United debate or having a drunken after-closing-time games session, you can't go wrong with ASCE.



The main rivals for the Premiership, Man Utd vs The Toon Army.

Don't be fooled by all the Premiership nonsense. If you're after a top soccer sim you could do a lot better than ASCE, by getting WorldWide Soccer... or waiting for WorldWide '98 which will also have the Premiership teams.

graphics	72
sound	85
playability	70
lastability	73

overall 70%

REVIEW

THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS

It's an unlikely name for an unlikely hero: the Crow. And, judging by the quality of Acclaim's latest release, we think that maybe something along the lines of "The Dodo" may be slightly more appropriate.

BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	BEAT'EM UP
RELEASE	OUT NOW



As you can see from the above shot, the absence of light-sourcing on the characters is a real missed opportunity.





Even fans of The Crow movie will be hard pushed to find anything appealing in Acclaim's latest effort.

If a movie is branded as having cult status, it invariably means that it's crap that nobody in their right mind would pay out good money to see. The Crow was the exception. It quickly achieved cult status (hope there's no printing errors there) with the fatality of its main star Brandon Lee. The sequel however suffered no documented fatalities on set and as result flopped at the box office. However, by way of clawing back some of the lost millions comes the movie tie-in game, The Crow: City of Angels. But it doesn't end there, as production is about to start on the third thrilling instalment of the series, the appropriately named Crow 3. I can hardly contain my excitement...

As with many of Acclaim's releases of late, The Crow: City of Angels is a beat 'em up. But not the usual 2D side-scrolling mockery of a game that has become synonymous with Acclaim, but a 3D beat 'em up similar in essence to Sega's own Die Hard Arcade. In that respect at least, The Crow is an improvement on Acclaim's recent titles. However, though it is clear that programmers Gray Matter attempted to make their game different from most beat 'em ups, I'm afraid it will remain confined to the realms of mediocrity. Here's why.

Obviously to create a videogame of The Crow, the programmers have had to alter the basic premise of the Crow, that being that he's invincible. For the purpose of the videogame he's been limited to three lives and appears to have picked up a martial art along the way, meaning that essentially this isn't the Crow. Playing the game you assume the guise of the main character Ashe, whereby your task is to explore the dimly lit 3D environments dispensing punishment to the unrighteous. This allows Ashe to rest his soul in eternal peace or something to that effect. A bit grim but then the film wasn't exactly all smiles either. Using a range of punches, kicks and improvised weapons such as bottles and snooker cues, your motion captured character engages in combat





Far from being a one-on-one beat 'em up, The Crow has the player doing battle with multiple enemies simulataneously.

CAPTURE THE MOMENT

Acclaim's much vaunted motion capture system has, up until now, been a source of much amusement in the office (bearing in mind the quality of the software it has appeared in) and I'm afraid to say the Crow doesn't remedy that. The process of motion capturing itself involves attaching little lights to someone and then filming them performing all sorts of degrading acts. However, it appears as if someone forgot to attach the lights to the leg area, as even simple movements like walking look ridiculous.





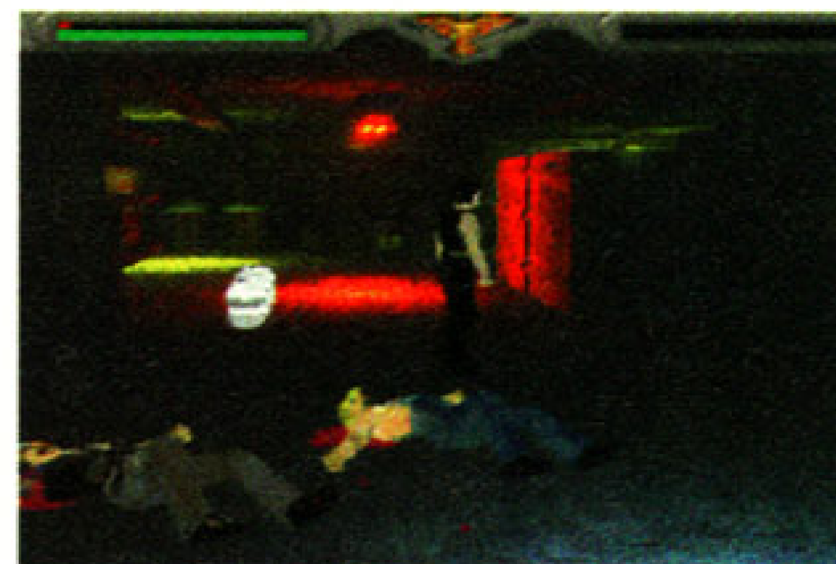
The innevitable bar room brawl sequence.



A fight breaks out with the Village People.



The lack of shadows gives you the impression that the characters are hovering.



Two down, a couple of hundred to go.





A broken snooker cue provides a handy improvised weapon for The Crow.







This limping hobble of a walk is evidence of Acclaim's much vaunted motion capture system... snigger.

with the enemy. Far from being a one-on-one beat 'em up though, the game has you doing battle with multiple enemies simultaneously making your task a tad more difficult. Up to three of the deviant skum attack you at the same time often cornering you before proceeding to smash your face in.

The graphics of The Crow: City of Angels are far more attractive than Acclaim's recent deluge of games, but still has a somewhat tatty overall appearance. The backgrounds are all pre-rendered with the 3D polygon characters overlaid. However as most of the graphics are streamed off the CD it makes for some irritating loading times as the in-game camera switches position. The camera positions themselves are designed to give the game a cinematic feel to it like that of the actual movie, but fails miserably being positioned in the most awkward of places. Despite the dramatic and colourfully lit rooms, shadows are curiously absent from the game giving impression that the characters are somehow hovering above the ground. Likewise there is no light-sourcing on the characters, meaning even if they enter a brightly coloured room, the characters remain the same colour.



Obviously this wouldn't matter so much if the game was fun to play but fun isn't a word associated with The Crow. Playing the game is a real chore due to sluggish and unresponsive controls with you exerting minimal control over your character. The fight scenes are all very similar, boring and largely repetitive. The collision detection is frankly terrible appearing to work on a random bases with punches and kicks often passing straight through an enemy fighter. A special mention should also go to the "alternative soundtrack" which consists of the same guitar riff repeated over and over again for the entirety of the level. Nine Inch Nails it ain't.

As such The Crow: City of Angels is a disappointing piece of software which bears little resemblance to the Crow films or a decent game for that matter. Don't be taken in by all the pre-rendered graphics and claims of an alternative soundtrack, as it will invariably lead to disappointment.

LEE NUTTER

CERTIFICATE: 15

Warning! The Crow: City of Angels may contain some scenes of sex and violence and/or sexually explitive swear words. Well, just the violence actually. As is the case in real life, being repeatedly slashed with a naked blade results in much blood being spilt. Hence the 15 certificate the game has been awarded, as the censors insist on shielding young innocents from the harsh realities of life.





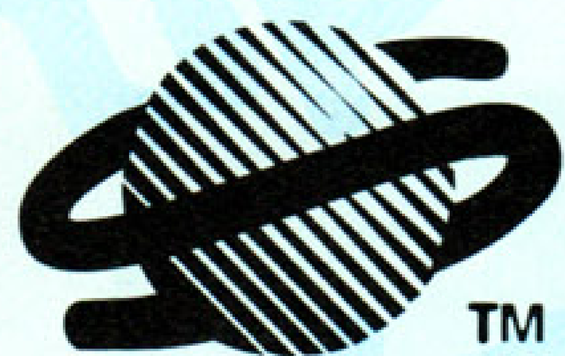
Pre-rendered graphics maketh not a good game.



The opening scenario takes place at the Last Chance saloon.

Not a bad effort of a game by Acclaim's usual standards but certainly not a wise purchase. Best avoided.

graphics	82
sound	60
playability	65
lastability	69
overall	67%



SEGA SATURN™ tips

Hey, hey, hey... it's tips time again! Boy, have we got some corkers this month, including the full moves list for Sega's Die Hard Arcade. Also make sure you check out part one of our awesome guide to the RPG game of the year, Shining the Holy Ark. Next month we'll be printing some amazing Fighters MegaMix cheats, so if you have any, send them in and you could win a mystery Sega Saturn prize. Send your tips to: Sega Saturn Tips Section, 37-39 Mill Harbour, Isle Of Dogs, London E14 9TZ

BUG TOO!

CHEAT CODES

These codes must be entered when the game is paused:
North, South, East, West - Up, Down, Left, Right
LAZY WEASEL - This is the level select code
LAWLESS - Makes BUG fly around his insect infested world
REAL EASY - Makes BUG invulnerable





Boy, I bet you folks just can't wait for BUG 3!?

DIE HARD TRILOGY

DRIVE THE BABY PRAM

Tired of fast cars? Well this is the tip for you. Follow the guidelines and you'll soon find the slowest vehicle on the planet. To drive the "Baby PRAM" you must make it 68% of the way through "Die Hard With A Vengeance", on the level that features the "Rain" effects. As soon as you're able to "Drive", turn around (do a 360) and a cop car should go speeding past. Follow it. You'll lose sight of him after he makes a left turn a few seconds after following, but your indicator will show a blue arrow in the direction the cop went. Follow it and you'll find a parking lot with an extra life, a time bonus (you will need it by the time you get here) and the "Baby Pram" in the parking lot. Just do what you normally do when you change "Vehicles".





SHINING THE HOLY ARK

EXPERIENCE BUILDING TIP

Here's how to keep encountering the 3333 experience granting creature in the tower to the east of the Capital of Enrich. From the entrance of the tower, head north, then turn right. You should then be able to see three paths in front of you (one to the left, another to the right and in front of you there'll be a door). Keep running from the left path to the right path and back again and you should ALWAYS be able to fight the 3333 experience critter.
The same creature also pops up regularly in the East Shrine, and at this point in the game the extra levels you can gain are VITAL!



THE CROW

PASSWORDS

Everyone thinks this game is rubbish, but not me. No, I love it. So much so that I managed to track down some nifty passcodes for it. Enter these codes to proceed further into the game:

1: AAAAXYBBAA - The Pier
2: YXYXABYYXA - The Ship



Hmm... nice waistcoat! The Crow checks out the latest criminal fashions at the Blue Oyster bar.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

FAST RELOAD, DAMAGE BONUS AND UNLIMITED WEAPONS

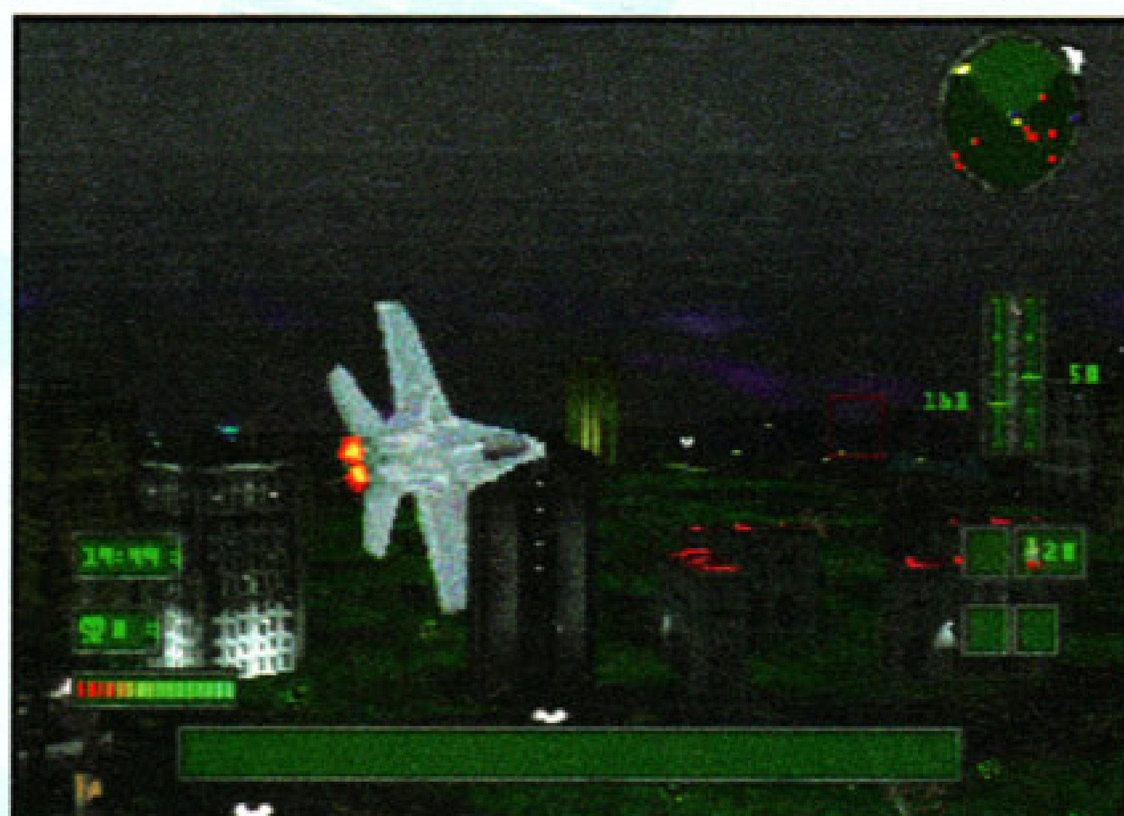
Using this little cheat, you'll be able to kick the alien scum off the planet in no time at all. Go to the options mode and enter the player name "GO POSTAL." Then exit to the game select screen and quickly enter: Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y. This will take you to a hidden cheat menu, and from here you'll be able to switch the FAST RELOAD, DAMAGE BONUS, and WEAPONS modes on.

Fast Reload lets you fire missiles rapidly. Damage Bonus lets you destroy aliens, generators, and vehicles in one shot. Weapons gives you unlimited firepower.

SELECT PLANE

Go to the options mode and enter the player name "MR HAPPY." Then exit to the game select screen and quickly enter: Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y. You will go to a cheat menu, and you'll be able to select any plane. By the way, If you're playing ID4 you've obviously not bothered to read our scathing review this issue. Shame on you!





DOOM

Stuck on Doom, eh? Well here are some handy codes for you to try.

Doom Levels 9-20

9: FWC!2FRYJK
10: FBB91DQDKJ
11: HIJ35QNKDB
12: HHO6RTMGCF
13: N55ZBB3LSQ
14: ML3199O1Q5
15: !TJBLC5!53
16: W9KCOLY764
17: PZ86P5MBCF
18: 42SL344BVV
19: XOHFY12Y46
20: KNYOCQKSTR





SATURN BOMBERMAN

Here are some ace codes for this explosive game.

NORMAL GAME

Stage select with maximum power items (Maximum fire and number of bombs, remote control, kick and line bombs)

On the "Press start button" screen, enter:
(1st Stage)
L + R + upper left + A at the same time
(2nd Stage)
L + R + upper left + B at the same time
(3rd Stage)
L + R + upper right + C at the same time
(4th Stage)
L + R + upper right + X at the same time
(5th Stage)
L + R + upper + Y at the same time

START WITH SIX BOMBERMEN

In case the player start the normal game at 10-11:00 am, he can use six Bomberman. (usually three)

BATTLE GAME

Hidden characters (YUNA & MANTO) and computer level 4 (the level is usually set from 1 to 3). On the "Match play" select screen, press and hold L + R at the same time for one second to gain YUNA, with her speed multiplied four times. MANTO has the power globe.
This code is different on the Japanese version, but the above should work just fine on the UK edition of this fine game.



DIE HARD ARCADE

Tired of hearing the same old boring music? Enter this code for a Remixed Soundtrack. On the title screen, press and hold X + Y + Z and press Start to choose Die Hard arcade. As if that wasn't enough, here's the complete moves list for Sega's awesome 3D beat-'em-up... enjoy!

BASIC MOVES

Punch: P
Kick: K
Jump: J
Low Punch: Down + P
Low Kick: Down + P
Run: Tap and Hold (Right or Left)
Grab: Touch any enemy
Uppercut: Hold Left or Right, P, P, P
Foot Sweep: Hold Left or Right, P, P, K
Turning Back-fist: P, Hold Left or Right
Turning Sidekick: K, Hold Left or Right



JUMPING ATTACKS

Shoulder Slam: J, Down + P
Knee Slam: J, Down + K
Double Jump Back Kick: Hold Left or Right, K + J
Spinning Attack: J + P + K
Double Hammerfist: J, hold P
Jump Kick: J + K
Drill Kick/Flip Kick: J, Hold K

THROWS

Pile Driver: K, K, P, P, K
Arm Throw: K, K, P, P, P
Monkey Throw: J, K
Frankensteiner: J, P

SPECIAL MOVES

Vertical Back Kick: P, P, P, K
Jump Back Spin Kick: P, P, P, P, K
Stun Palm: Hold P, Release
Backflip Kick: Hold K, Release



Leap Kick: Run + K
Tackle: Run + P
Dragon Uppercut: P + J
Dashing Elbow: P + J, Right or Left

WITH WEAPONS

Handgun or Machine Gun Fire: P
Crouch and Fire: Down + P
Kick: K
Fire Diagonally Down: J, P
Turn and Shoot: Face opposite direction + P
Dragon Gun Uppercut: P + J
Handcuff Arrest with gun: Grab, P, P
Hog-tie Arrest with gun: Grab, K, K
Double Kick Head Smash withMachine Gun: K, K, P
Double Sweep Uppercut with Machine Gun: Hold Down, K, K, P

MOVES WITH BROOM, PIPE AND ROBOT LEG

Triple Spin High: P, P, P
Down-up Crosswise: K, K, K
Low Sweep: Down + K
Pole Vault: Run + K
Joust Attack: Run + P
Dragon Pole Upper: P + J
Jump Forward Sweep: Double Tap Left or Right, K

MOVES WITH AXE, KNIFE, BOTTLE AND MISSILE LAUNCHER

Jab/Fire: P
Slash/Kick: K
Triple Poke: P, P, P
Low Triple Slash: K, K, K
Low Slice: Down + K
Super Drop: J, Down + P
Dragon Axe Upper: P + J
Turnaround Swing: Face opposite direction, P or K
Anti-Tank Rifle Fire: PDownward Swing: K
Turnaround Swing: Face opposite direction, P or K





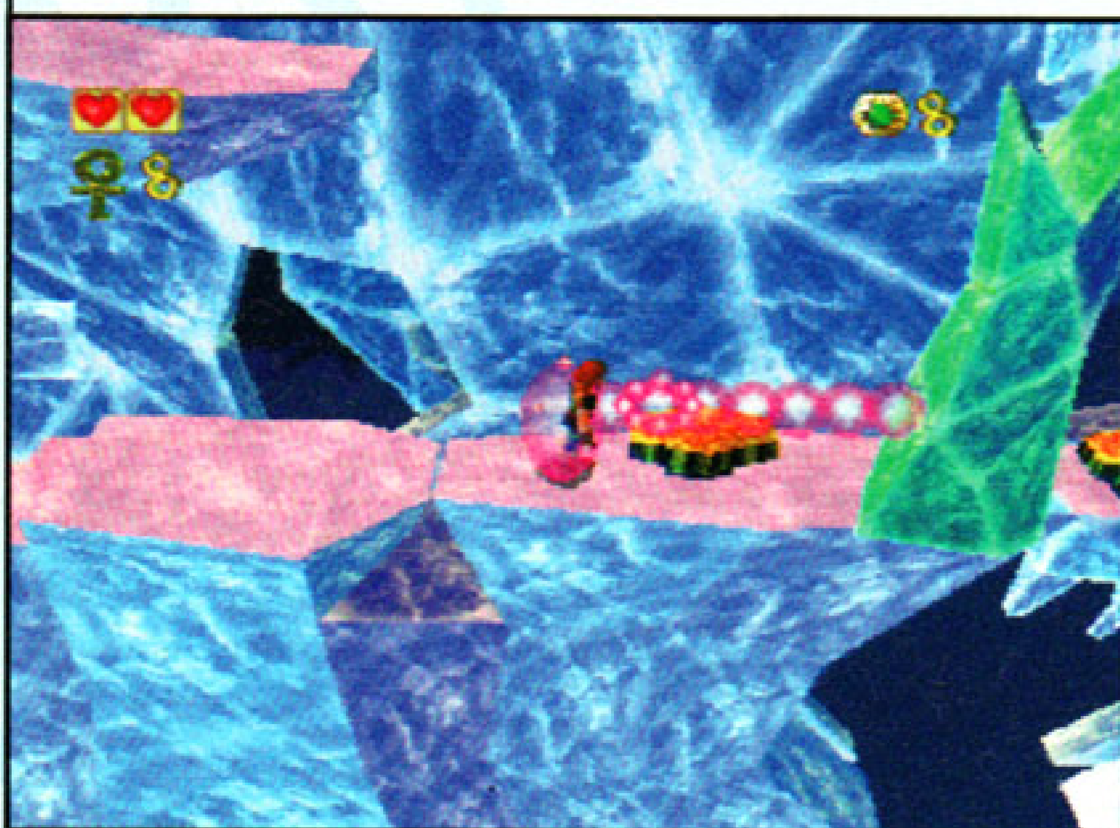


PANEMONIUM

CODES GALORE

No sooner than the game is released, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE brings you the complete code list for this stunning 3D platformer. What a swell bunch we are.





Extra health
Enter CORONARY at the password screen. Extra hearts are added to your character's health bar.

Extra lives
Enter VITAMINS at the password screen. Players' lives are now boosted to a whopping 31.

Immortal enemies
If you want a real challenge, enter EVILDEAD at the password screen. Now all enemies become invulnerable.

Permanent firepower
Enter OTTOFIRE at the password screen. Players now retain the last weapon they collected even if hit by an enemy creature.

Invincibility
Enter HARDBODY at the password screen. Fargus and Nikki are now completely indestructible.

Select any level
Enter ALMABHOL at the password screen. It's now possible for players to choose any stage with 31 lives and 7 hearts.

Bonus Screen
Enter CASHDASH at the password screen. After every level you'll now play the bonus race.

Pinball game
Enter TOMMYBOY at the password screen. Complete a stage and you'll play the pinball game.

Rotate the screen
Enter TWISTEYE at the password screen. Hold the L and R buttons and hit left or right to rotate the screen. Hit down to reset the camera.

Quit to the level select
Enter INANDOUT at the password screen. Quitting the game brings you back to the level select screen instead of the title screen.

Switch characters during the game
Enter BODYSWAP then hit Z during the game to change between the two characters.











HEXEN

WALK THROUGH WALLS

This code even makes Casper the ghost scream. On the options screen enter: Up, Down, Left, Right, Y, Y, Z, Z, A, X, Up, Down, C, B. This cheat then removes all solid barriers allowing players to travel anywhere.



Boys in the hood. Mad monks dish out lessons in pain in GT Interactive's decent 3D corridor blaster.

ANDRETTI RACING

EXTRA CARS AND WIRE FRAME

Getting bored of the same old cars? Well, these cheats will soon brighten things up.

Phat Car Mode
Enter PHATCARS on the registry screen to get phat-car mode.

Even more secret cars
In the Career mode, enter the name GOBEARS! to receive seven secret stock cars.

Press Start Car
Enter PRESSSTART on the registration screen to get the Press Start car.

Wire frame Mode
Enter WYRED on the registry screen to enter a cool wire-frame mode

Secret Cars
Enter the name "GOBRUINS!" in the Begin Career option to unveil a further six new cars.



Okay, so Andretti Racing isn't exactly in the same class as the likes of Sega Rally and Daytona USA but it's still a nifty little racer. If you bought the game and thought you'd seen everything it had to offer, then try these tips.

GRID RUNNER

We've had quite a few request for this game, so here's a few tips to help you through Virgin's futuristic sports title.

Credit Heads
At the Restore Game screen, enter the password: A, Y, A, Right, Down, Y, Up, Right, Right, A.

Get All Flags
At the Restore Game screen, enter the password: Down, Y, Right, A, Right, Up, Right, B, A, Down.

Free For All
At the Restore Game screen, enter the password: Up, Y, A, Right, Up, Y, B, Down, Right, Down.



BLACK DAWN

LEVEL SELECT
Finding EA's chopper challenge a little too tough? At the "Press Start" screen, press and hold C, press and hold B, press and hold A, press and hold Up, press and hold L. Then release A, then C, then L, then Up. You'll hear the phrase "Blackhole engaged." During the game, press and hold A, C, Up, L to skip to the next level.





Airborne action abounds in EA's 86% rated 'copter game. If you're looking for a cool aerial shoot 'em up, this is it.



Get outta there you crazy...! Mid-air collisions just aren't going to help anyone now are they?

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX

FEATURE LIST
We've been hounding Sega for ages for these codes, and finally they've arrived. Welcome to a large part of the Fighters MegaMix feature list.

Hidden Courses
After finishing courses A through D, courses E, F, G appear, finish these courses and course H appears. Complete this course and course I appears.

Hidden Character Appearance Conditions
Finish A course: Candy in new costumes (as 3P, 4P colour)
Finish B course: Akira/Sarah from VF Kids)
Finish C course: Ura Bahn (Dark Bahn)
Finish D course: Janet (from Virtua Cop 2)



Finish E course: Baek/Bean (from Sonic the Fighters)
Finish F course: RentaHero (from "Rent a Hero", an old MegaDrive RPG)
Finish G course: Deku (Training mode opponent)
Finish H course: Shiba (VF1 prototype character)
Finish I course: Hornet (from Daytona)
Start the game 29 times: Meat (Kumachan's 3P colour)
Play the game for 84 hours: Palm Tree (Kumachan's 4P colour)

Make Training Mode Opponent "Deku"
Finish A through D courses and put more than 50 "OK" marks in the training mode.

Additional Options
By completing any course, the following options will be added;
BGM On/Off: Turn on/off CD-DA BGM's.
Ending BGM: Listen to Ending BGM of courses you've finished.
1P No Damage On/Off: Player 1 becomes invincible. Finish all courses and play more than 500 rounds.
2P No Damage On/Off: Player 2 becomes invincible. Finish all courses and play more than 500 rounds.
Hyper Mode On/Off: All the moves are be performed without "stiffening". Play more than 100 rounds. Training Enemy: Player now choose the training mode opponent. Finish all courses and put more than 600 "OK" marks in the training mode.
Survival stage: Survival mode stage now selectable. Finish all courses, and play survival mode more than 10 times. Portrait: Review Ending sequence graphics of completed courses.
Book Keep: Game statistics.









Shining the Holy Ark

Welcome indeed to the first instalment of our Shining the Holy Ark players guide, put together by a certain RICH LEADBETTER. Here you'll find full maps to every section game, along with solutions to all of the tough puzzles! We kind of feel that we let you guys down over Shining Wisdom tips coverage, so this is our chance to get some Shining credibility back! Let the adventure begin!



PART 1

SOME BASIC INFORMATION

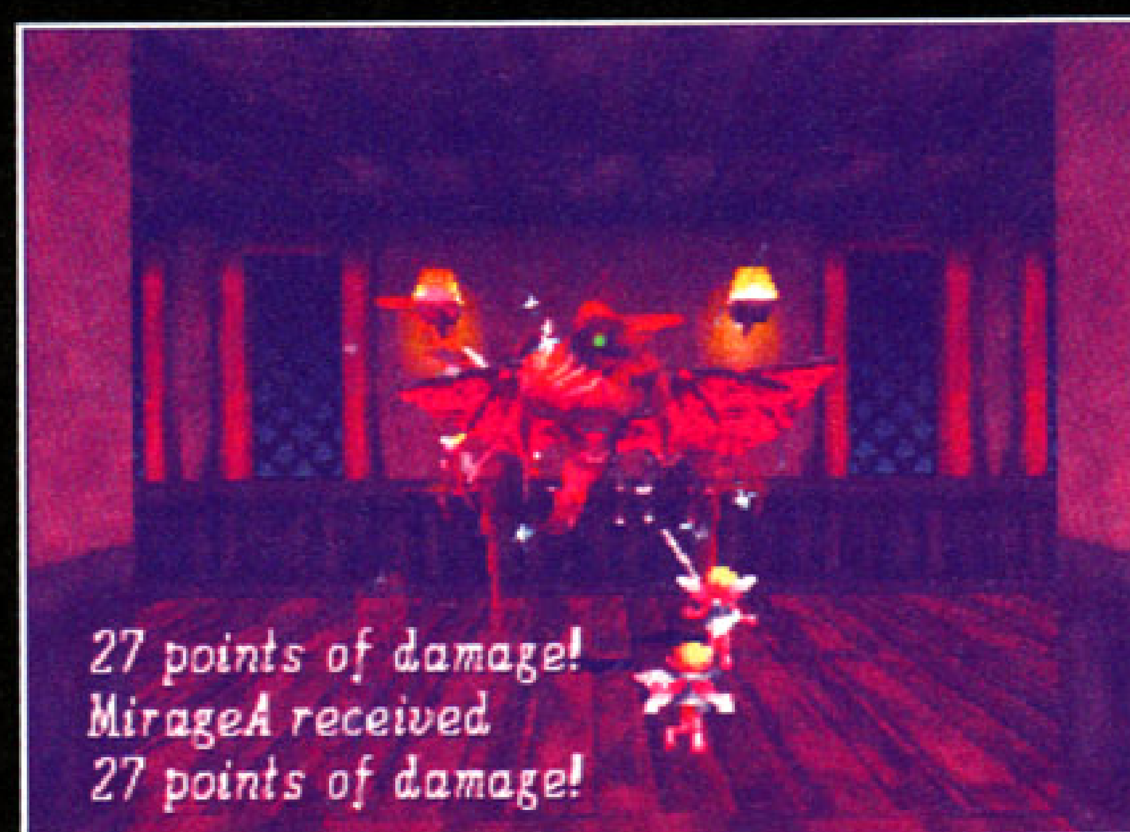
Shining the Holy Ark is a very deep adventure that's really easy to get into thanks to some well-crafted player interfaces. Everything about the game is really straightforward, bar one command. And that's the strafe option. Hold down the B button and use it in conjunction with left and right in order to side-step left and right. This is an essential command when you get to the latter stages of the game.



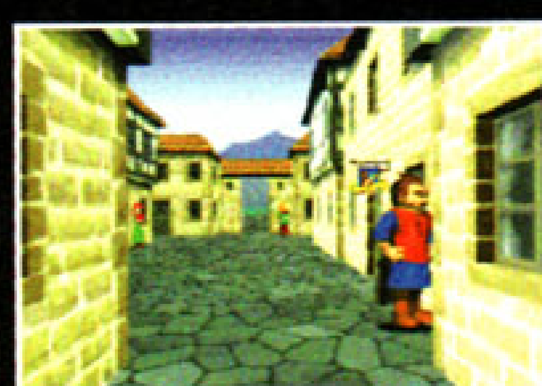
THE FAIRIES

Located around the map are hidden pixies, found by checking certain areas of each map. Once you find them they join your band and allow you to get in a pre-emptive strike on monsters before they attack you. At the bottom of the screen you'll find one representative per fairy grouping (cycle through them with the L and R buttons). Each group takes on different meanies, dependent on how they enter the screen before the fight begins. So from left to right we have:

1. Pixies (frontal assault)
2. Fairies (attacks from above)
3. Sucubus (attacks from the left)
4. Incubus (attacks from the right)
5. Leprechauns (attacks from below)








Some of the village locales in Shining the Holy Ark. The capital Enrich (left) and the mining settlement, Desire Village (right).



Eagle-eyed Shining players may notice that Rodi's in a different costume. Move to a new class and you get a new set of threads!



THE SOUTH SHRINE PUZZLE

I've included the solution to one puzzle I wasn't going to cover until next month. The reason I'm including it is because I just know we're going to get tons of phone calls on this one, so I'm trying to pre-empt you guys!

At the South Shrine you finally reach the Sacred Sword but you can't get it. You need to pick up seven stones and distribute them between two statues. Clues adorn the wall telling you the value of the various stones in relation to one-another, and you need to make sure that both statues get the same value. From the clues you need to work out the value of Black Onyx, then everything easily falls into place.

Basically it works out like this:

Diamond: 7 / Emerald: 6 / Aquamarine: 1
Black Onyx: 2 / Opal: 3 / Sapphire: 5 / Ruby: 4

Now simply distribute the stones between the two statues so that both of them get jewels totalling 14 in value. Simple eh? Well it was VERY tough to work out. If you succeed, you'll face a Witch boss... who is almost as tough to beat as the puzzle!



THE ADVENTURE BEGINS!

DESIRE MINE

Three heroes: yourself, Forte and Melody enter Desire Mine in order to track down a ninja gone bad: Rodi! Once in the mine, there's only one route through and finding Rodi is simplicity itself. Challenge him to battle! Although the outcome of the battle has no bearing on the following events, Rodi is easily defeated by you and Melody using physical attacks whilst Forte uses magic. You get a valuable 12 experience points for defeating him.

Whether you win or lose, a rockfall caused by the mystical spirits crash-landed spacecraft mortally wounds you all. Forte is possessed by an evil spirit and escapes. You, Melody and Rodi are saved by good spirits. Now you're immortal!

It's a simple case now of just finding your way out of the mine. Once out of the mind, check the dead end on the lower level. There's a fairy to find there!

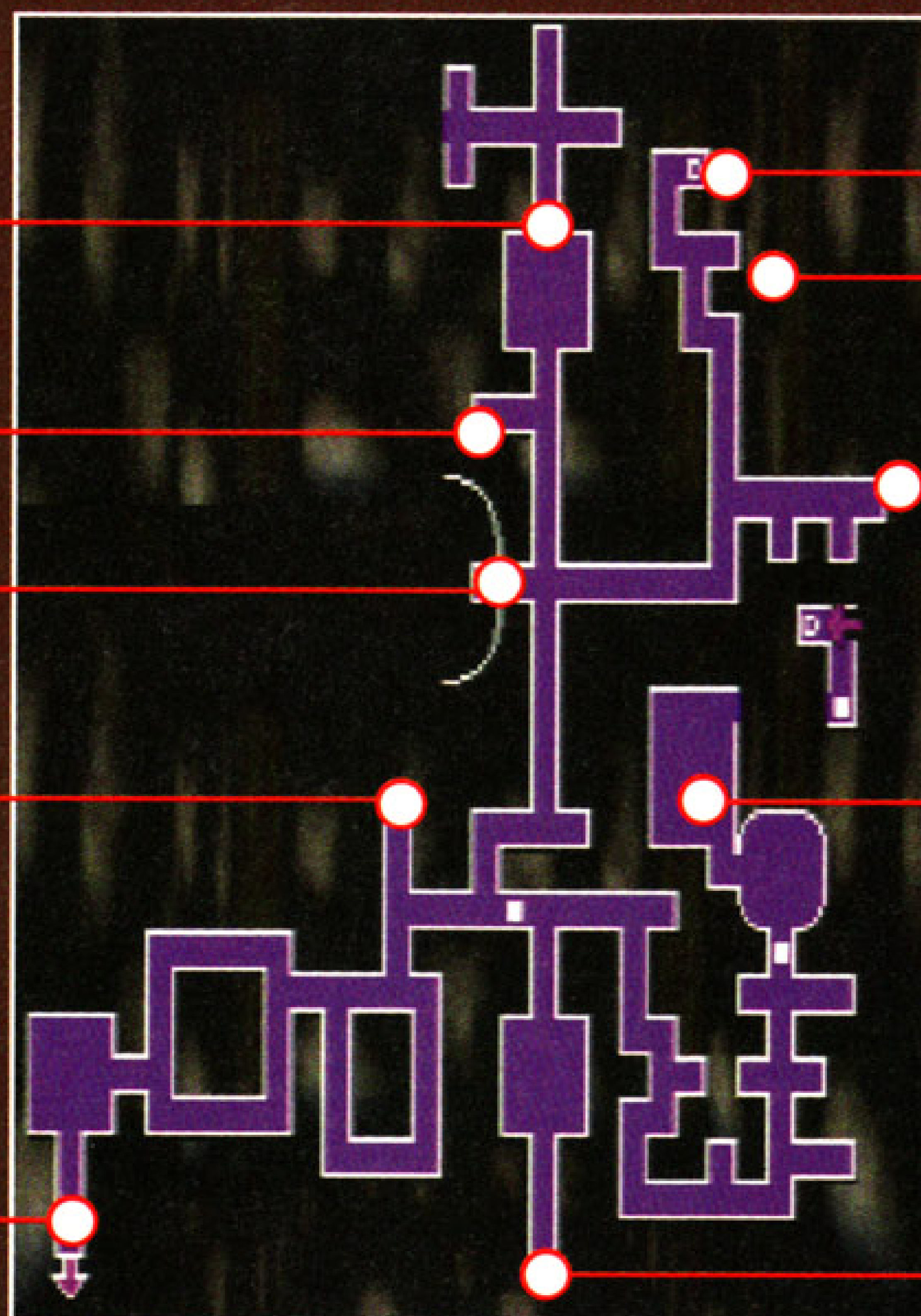
Travel to Desire Village and use your money to buy better weapons and armour. Visit the church to save your position and talk to the small boy outside. Tell him that you will find his puppy. Go to the pub and talk to Basso and Lisa. Leave the pub and they'll follow, demanding a fight with Rodi. The town leader stops the fight. Now go back into the pub, talk to the halfling and agree to journey to Enrich with him. Use the bell to get a good night's sleep. Doyle turns up and agrees to meet you in the forest. Agree with everything he says and then next morning leave the town and go to the forest...



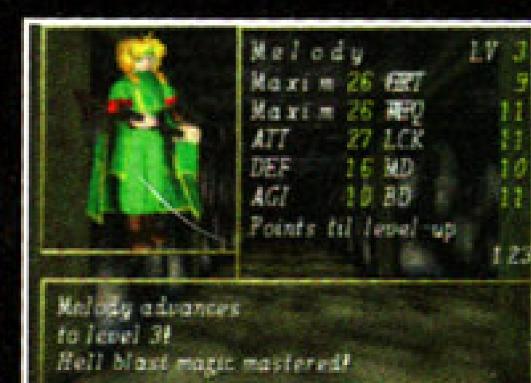
The ghosts, bats and what-have-you in the Desire Caves are really easy to beat – even for your weak characters.



DESIRE MINE 1F









The dead-end to the right is where you'll find a pixie.

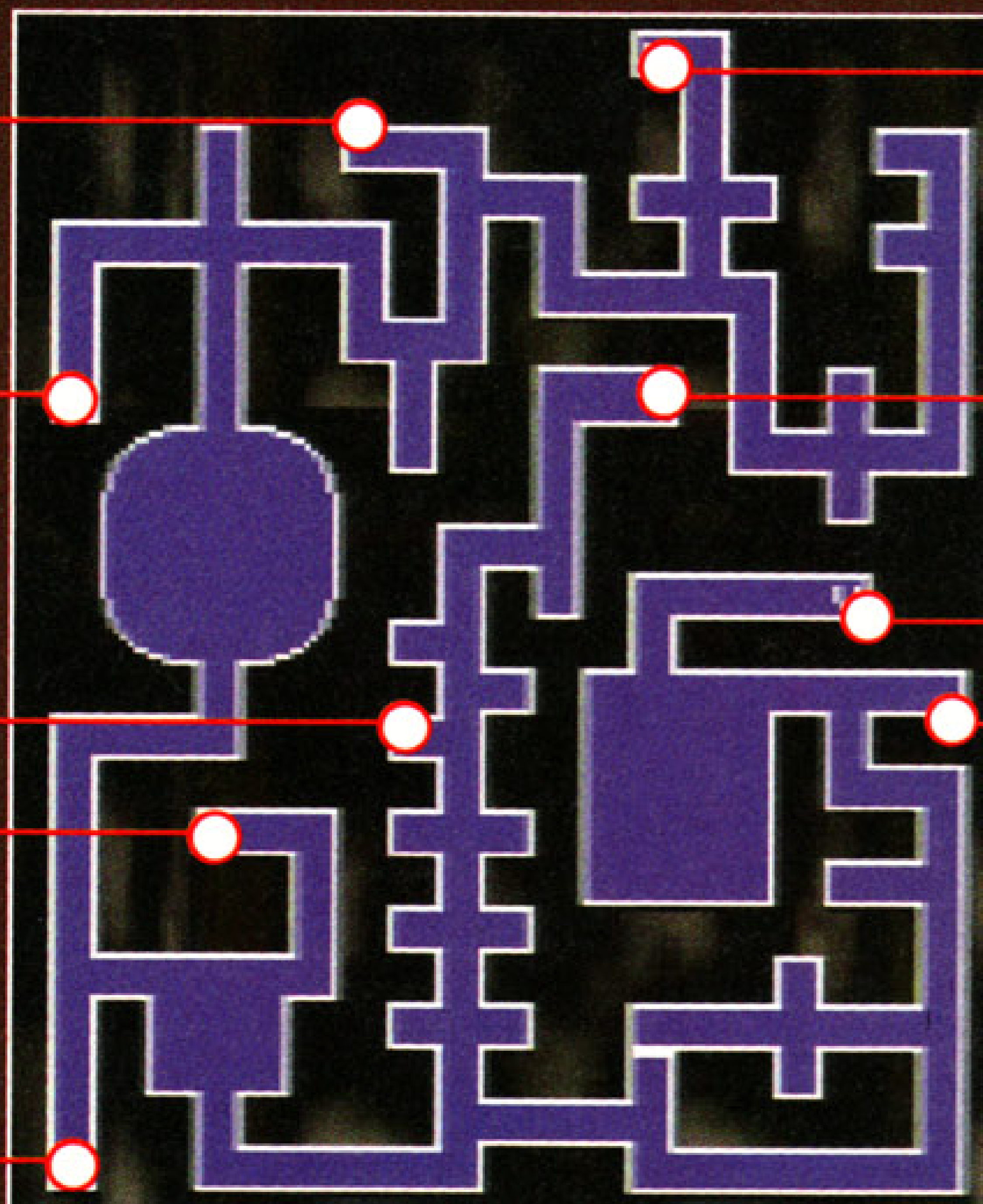






Doyle visits your room during the night (picture right).

DESIRE MINE B1



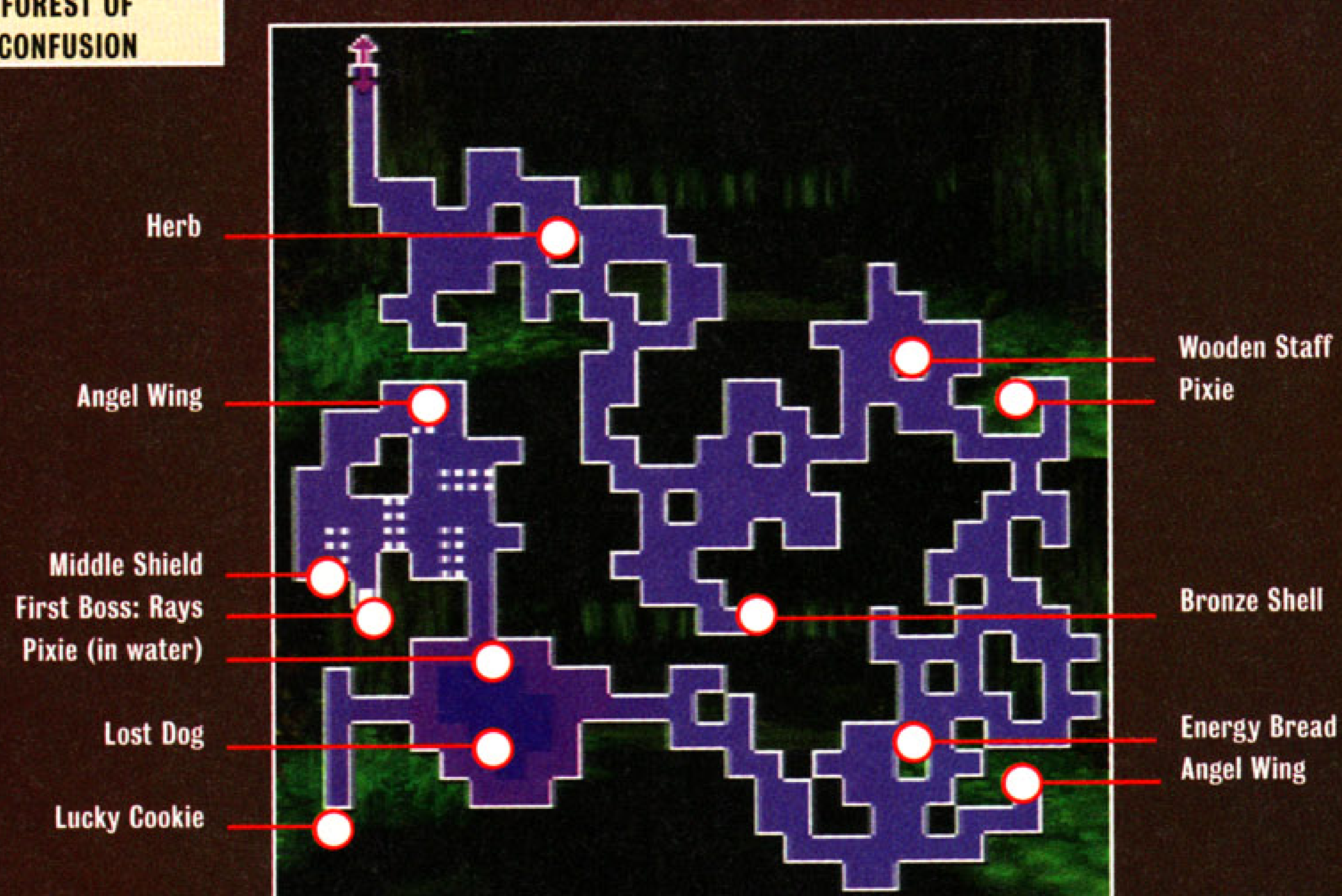
FOREST OF CONFUSION

You better make sure that your characters got the best possible weapons and armour in Desire Village - the meanies in the forest take no prisoners! There are a lot of blind alleys and dead-ends in the forest. Use the map to plot the best possible route through, remembering to pick up ALL of the fairies, weapons









and tools. Once you reach the pond you find the little boy's lost puppy (give it back when you return to Desire Village to pick up a bonus fairy).

Now go north into the graveyard. Loot the entire area for equipment and tools, then head for the crypt. Restore yourself with herbs or magic, then take on Rays - the boss of the area! Rays is pretty easy to defeat. Just use magic or herbs to keep your strength up, and pile on the damage!

Once he has been defeated, Doyle turns up and opens up the crypt for you, allowing you access to the Forest Cave.

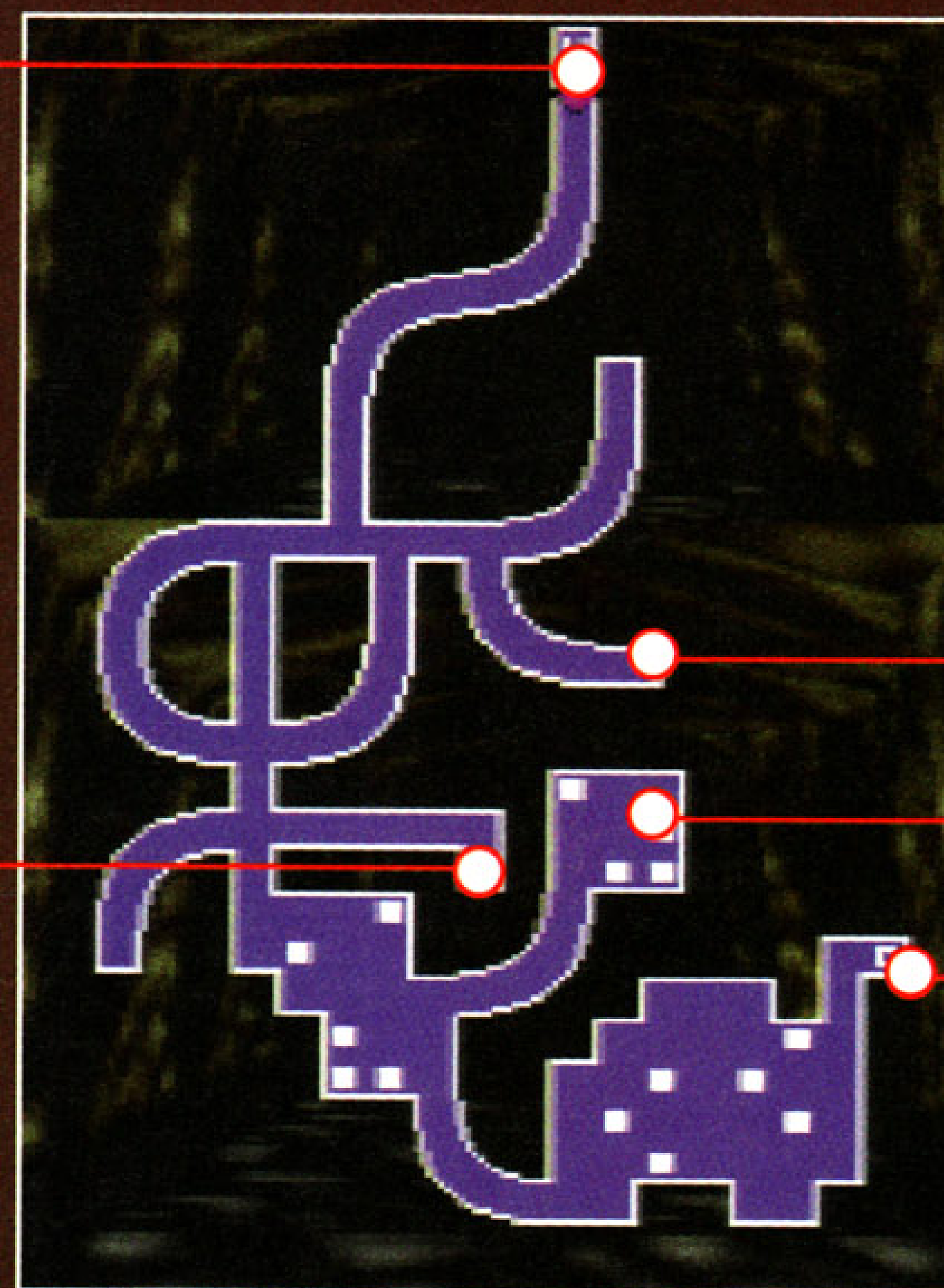
FOREST CAVE

If you're really low on magic and herbs, it might be worth using an Angel Wing in the forest, warping your way back to Desire Village. Then stock up, sell your excess weapons and go back to the Forest (after a night in the pub to get your energy back). Once you're at Forest Cave, you meet a hardier, tougher range of foes. If you defeated Rays comfortably, you should be okay for the denizens you meet here. Like the forest, the cave system is designed to send you down a lot of dead ends. That's where the map comes in. Simply collect the tools and weapons and avoid the dead ends. Don't bother examining the holes in the wall. Of all of them, only one (on Forest Cave B2) has anything to collect, in this case a fairy. Make doubly sure you get the Mithril Ore!



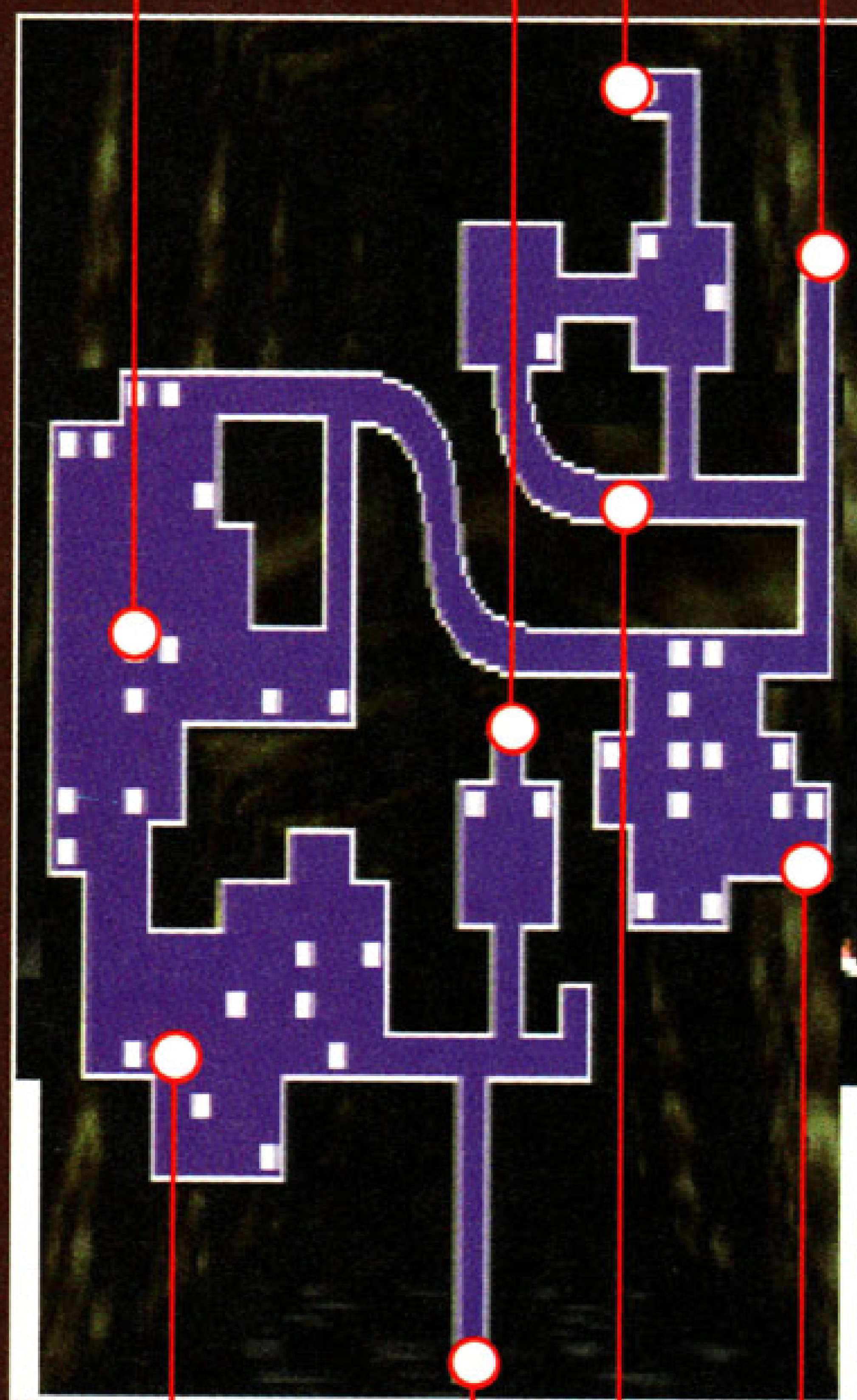


FOREST CAVE B1 NORTH SIDE



Exit to Forest of Confusion
Pixie
Antidote Herb
Bronze Staff
Exit to Forest Cave B2

FOREST CAVE B2



Heather Robe
Exit to Forest Cave B1 North Side
Herb
Bronze Brace
Exit to Forest Cave B1 South Side
Pixie in Hole
Magic Nectar
Pixie

Once you reach the end of the Forest Cave system you find yourself on the Map Screen - Enrich is in sight! And still the adventure is only just beginning!

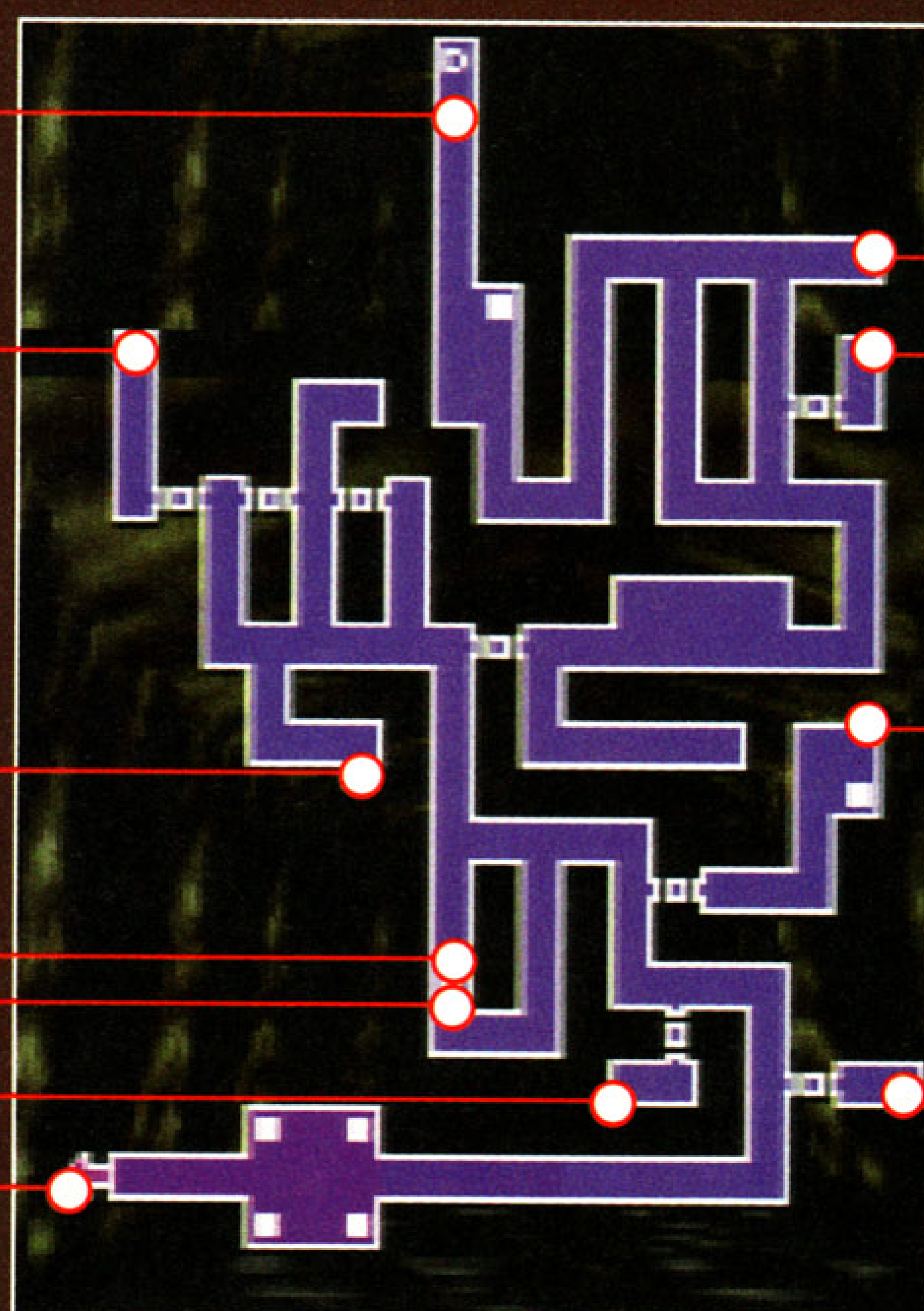




The opposition you face in the Forest Cave is tougher than anything you would have faced previously!



FOREST CAVE B1 SOUTH SIDE



Exit to Forest Cave B2
Empty Jar
Antidote Herb
Mithril Ore
Scale Suit
Cobra in Jar
Cobra in Jar
Angel Wing
Cobra in Jar
Pixie
Exit to Map Screen

ENRICH DUNGEONS

Once you're in Enrich, do the usual "save your position and spend a night in the inn" routine to replenish your points. Get new weapons and sell the excess. Now it's time to go to the castle. Here you find an evil witch in control of the king, who is in the thrall of the evil spirits! So too is Forte, your erstwhile companion.

You get chucked into prison for your efforts, although Doyle quickly turns up to save you, opening the cell door. One other cell is unlocked in the block. Search the wall in there for some fairy power and then escape down the well!

Here you'll meet Sabato - the mysterious man who hired you mercenaries to begin with. He tells you u get in is by finding the key which is hidden deep in the bowels of the Enrich Dungeons.

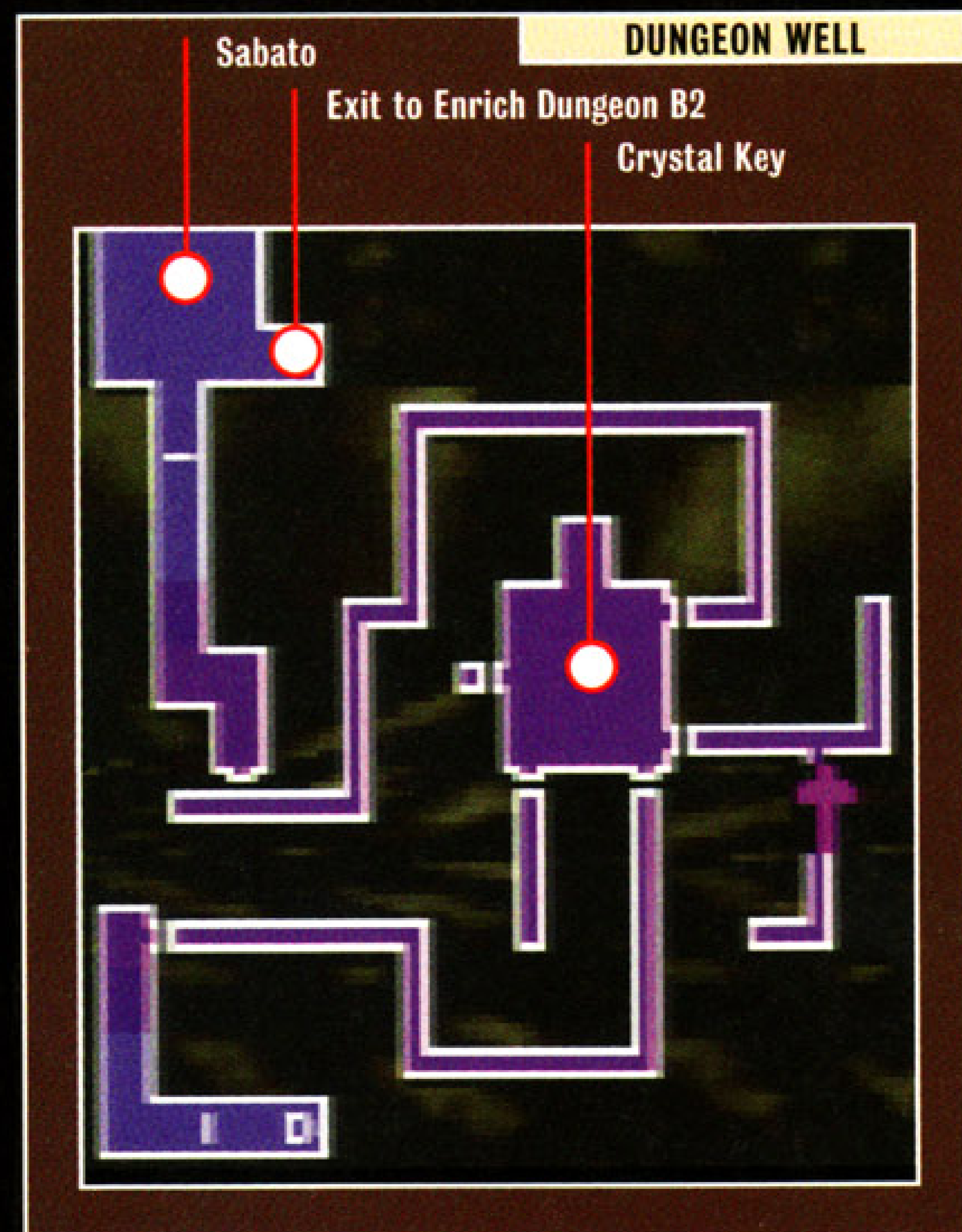
There's a route back to the Town Well, allowing you access to Enrich, meaning you can stock up on herbs and what-have-you, but Sabato himself is very useful as you explore the dungeons. When you're low on magic and hit points, simply return to him and he guards over you as you rest.



Follow his advice to get the best possible armour and weapons from the town - the monsters you meet in the dungeons are definitely the worst yet! The method in finding the Mansion Key is pretty straightforward. Three crests are hidden in the dungeon and these match up with three symbols found on the walls. Once you match the right symbol with the right crest, the map changes slightly, allowing you to progress further.

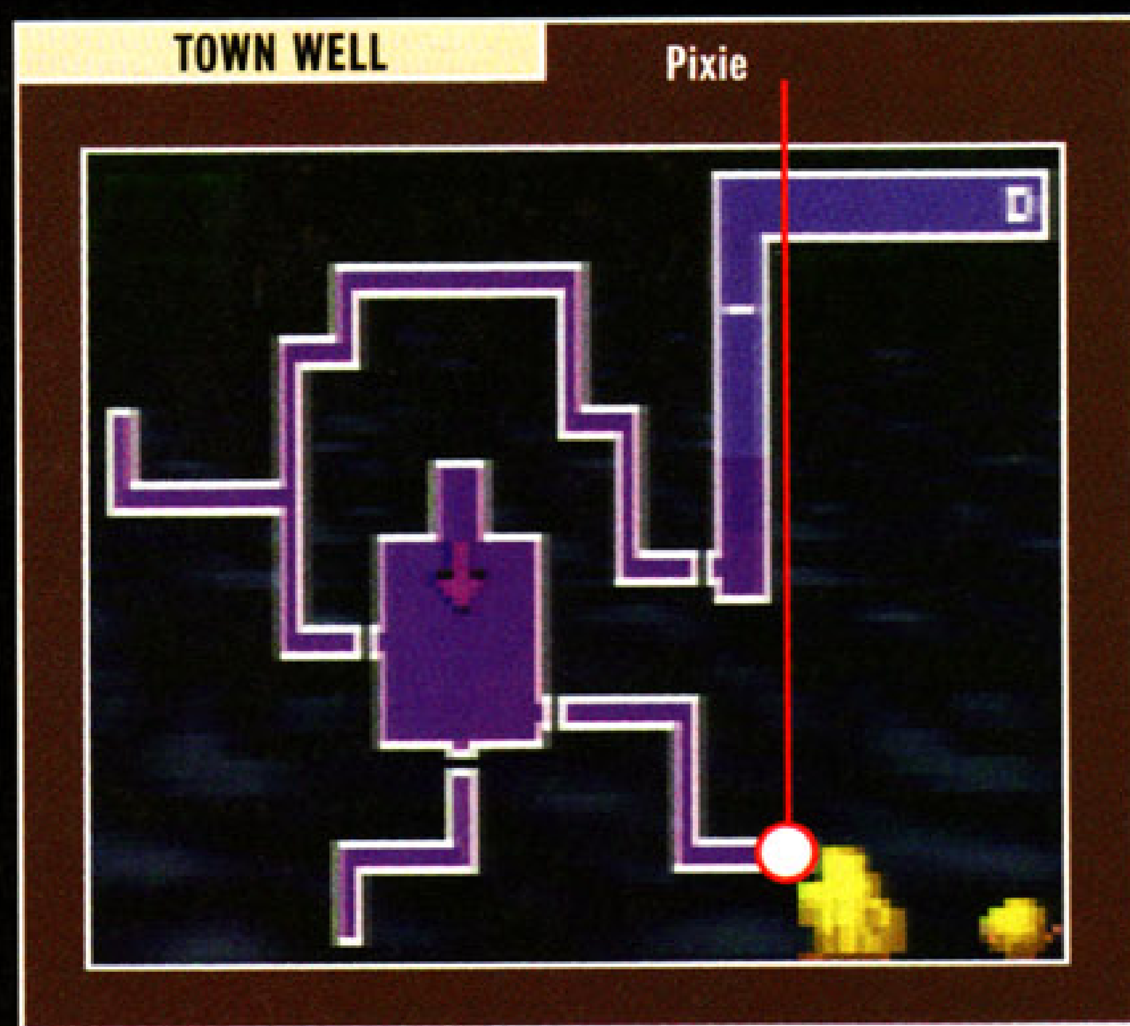
Check out the map to Enrich Dungeon B2 and find the crests in this order: first of all, get the Snake Crest (found on the pier to the east) and match this with the triangle symbol. Next up, get the Goat Crest from the north and match this with the square symbol on the south-west. Finally, get this opens up the route to the Eagle Crest which finds a home on the hexagonal symbol. Use the map for precise locations.

Once the final crest is in place, you find yourself confronted with a huge skeleton. Luckily, he's completely harmless. In fact, he's helpful - the only boss in the game who doesn't attack you! The Gold Key is yours now and that opens up the Mansion! Onward!









NEXT MONTH!

We'll be tacking the shrines in addition to the mansion in the next issue, and we should hopefully have it all wrapped up in the issue after that. Miss any of it at your peril.

ENRICH DUNGEON

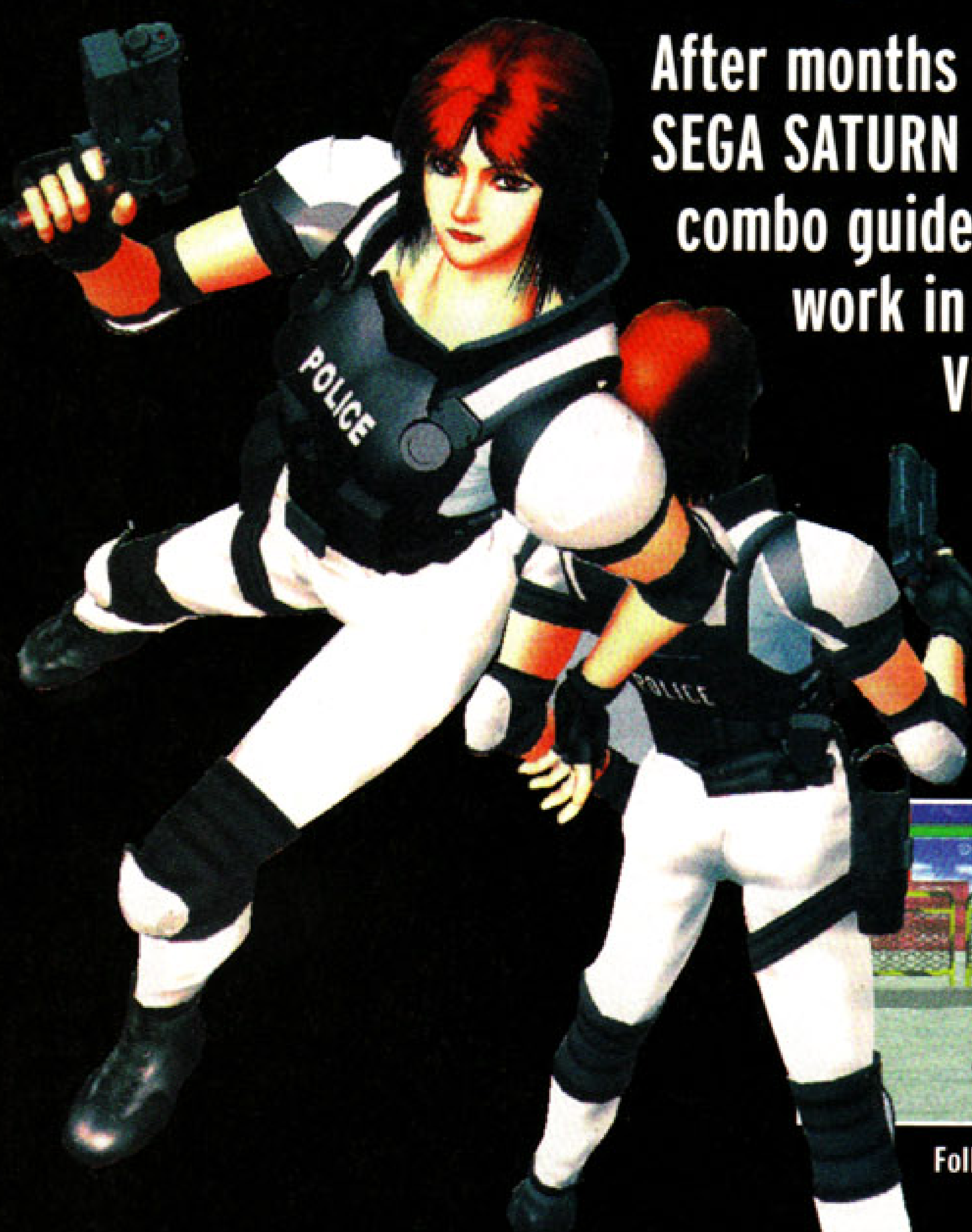
Goat Crest
Pixie
Cobra in Pot
Hexagonal Symbol (use Eagle Crest)
Pixie
Antidote Herb
Iron Brace
Power Juice
Eagle Crest
Potion
Exit to Town Well
Cobra in Pot
Slash Dagger
Triangle Symbol (use Snake Crest)
Snake Crest
Gold Key
Cobra in Pot
Cobra in Pot



PLAYERS GUIDE

Fighters MegaMix Combo Guide PART 3

After months of waiting, the incredible Fighters MegaMix is finally on the market and SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE celebrates the fact with the first part (of two) of an enormous combo guide, centred on our favourite characters in the game. All of these combos work in Fighting Vipers mode, although variations of them may also function in Virtua Fighter mode. So any way, without further ado, let's get on with it!





Follow with ⇦⇦P.



End the combo with PPP⇩K...



Which should end with a low hit.



All Janet comes start with ⇧P.



This one's really simple...



Just press KK for two hits!

GENERAL TECHNIQUES

Fighters MegaMix is one of the deepest fighting games on the market today, mixing aspects of VF2, VF3 and Fighting Vipers to devastating effect. In these red boxes dotted over the six pages, you'll find general tips that should greatly boost your basic skill.

JANET MARSHALL

Of all the secret characters in Fighters MegaMix, just about the most complete has to be Virtua Cop 2's Janet Marshall. And that's mainly down to the fact that her moves list is a mirror image of Aoi's from VF3, bar the multi-throws. So, why haven't we just copied out a ton of Aoi's VF3 combos? Well, the sad truth is that although the moves list is identical, the effect of those moves is totally different in Fighters MegaMix. Moves which should float don't. In fact, Janet's uppercut (⇧P) is just about the only one that does!



Another simple finish here...



It's just ⇨⇨KK. Two kicks!



Start with ⇨⬁⇩⬀⇦P+G...



And finish with a cool P+G!



This double spin-back hit is...



... Performed with ➡ P+K P.



AKIRA YUKU

Akira was by far and away the best character in Virtua Fighter 2... if you could master him. The good news is that for Fighters MegaMix, he's even more powerful and a lot easier to get to grips with. Akira specialises in short-range combat... his long range moves are super-easy to avoid and are mainly there to tempt the opponent in. In Fighting Vipers mode, Akira is probably even more powerful than his VF3 incarnation, simply because there's far more time to pull of a combo once an opponent is in the air. For Akira those extra nanoseconds mean a HUGE amount of damage!



Use uppercut to float (⇧⇧P).



And when they're in the air...



... Make use of the Dragon Spear.



That's ⇧K+G ⇨P ⇦⇨⇨P+K.



Do another uppercut (⇧⇧P)...



Now charge: ⇦⇨⇨P+K.



Power Uppercut 1 (⇧⇧P)...



Power Uppercut 2 (⇧⇧P)!

USE THE WALL!

Go into Training Mode and try any of the combos first of all away from the wall and then next to it. Notice the extra damage you get from the wall? Cool eh? Well, if you're using a Fighting Vipers character this is where you get payback (in an open arena all of them bar Bahn are doomed!). The other advantage of a wall is that some moves are so powerful your opponent is sent flying away from you. With the wall present they can't get away, leaving them in range to continue your combination onslaught! Both Fighting Vipers and Virtua Fighters have moves which use the wall (check the Training Mode). Typically the VFers' wall throws are more powerful in a fight situation. The VFers also have more throws so that if their back is against the wall, they can flip over the foe's head and reverse the postition.



Start here with ⬇⇨ P+K...



The Dragon Spear is awesome!



Three powerful hits! Use...



⇧K+G ⇨P ⇦⇨⇨P+K. Quickly!



Start with a ⇨⇨K kick...



... Into an uppercut (⇧⇧P)...



Finish with a ⇦⇨P+K strike!



The trip is useful (⇦⇩P+G)



Do a ⇨⇨K kick to float...



And then finish with the...



... Devastating Dragon Spear!



That's ⇧K+G ⇨P ⇦⇨⇨P+K.



A simple one: ⇨⇨⇨P to elbow.

Follow with a charge ⇦⇨⇨P+K

JACKY BRYANT

Jacky has always been the most "mechanical" and predictable of the fighters in the VF series, favoured by the cheesiest players in the cosmos. This is down to his powerful knock-downs, which can ALWAYS be followed with a pounce. Although he has a lot more potential for decent combination strikes, in Fighters MegaMix, he remains as predictable as ever. If it's combos you want, you're going to have to make do with a pretty paltry selection. Actually, it isn't that bad - it's just that just about every one of his effective combos tends to start with the knee, which - and let's face facts - is easy to dodge.


Perform the Beat Knuckle (P+K).


Now finish the combo off with...


... A simple PK combo. Cool.


This two-punch/ knee combo...


... Is achieved with the motion...


... PP⇨K. Not bad at all!


Perform a back spin punch into...


... Roundhouse: ⇦P⇩K!


Jacky's best float is ⇨K.


A simple kickflip: ⇩K.

RISING ATTACK!

The method used to rise after being decked is exclusively FIghting Vipers. This impacts more on the VF players used to more options, but it does present a surprise throw opportunity. Push towards your opponent to roll their way and as you rise you can choose just about any throw you want.


Start with a KP combo...


... And finish off with...


A low kick (⇩K). Ace.

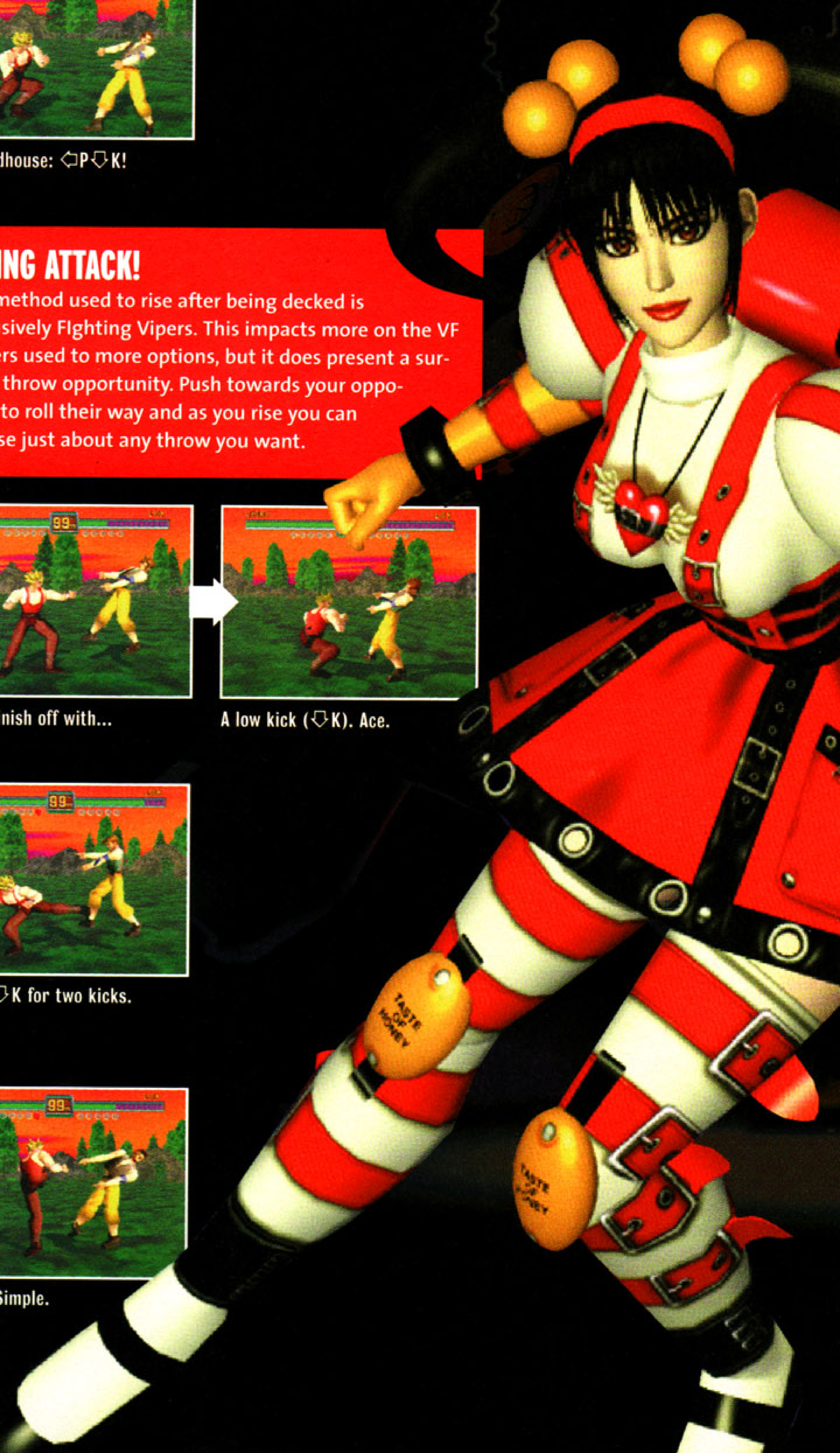

This two hit combo is simple.


Press K⇩K for two kicks.


Start with PK...


And finish with a roundhouse...


⇩K+G. Simple.




The elbow-knee combo is cool.


Execute with ⇨PK...


Perform a PPP⇦K combo...


One punch and the flip hits.


Finish off with a ⬁K kick.


The scissor kick combo follows...


Press ⇩KK for two hits.

SARAH **BRYANT**

Sarah has never been the most elegant of fighters in the Virtua Fighter series and this remains the case in FMM. However, what she lacks is more than made up for with the sheer aggression behind her attacks. Designed to be an awesome fighter at either close or long range, Sarah has a move for every occasion. Try out some of these combos and you'll see what we mean. Ready yourself for VF3 - in that game even more of her moves have combination potential! In addition to combos, learn to use the Moonsault jump (⬃P or ⇧K⬃P) to confuse your foes.


Finish with a rising kick ⬀K.


The knee is a float staple: ⇨K.


Finish with a PPPK combo.


This is quite damaging indeed.


Use the scissor kick ⇩KK...


... For two easy hits.


A little-used combo has cool...


... Potential. That's ⇩P+K K.


The flip kick is cool (⇧K)...


Finish any of these with the ⬁K.


A good finish is the easy combo:


... PPPK. The last two hit home.



Every Sega Saturn owner should have a copy of the stunning Fighters MegaMix!



DODGE!

Pressing the shoulder button in any play mode sees your character dodge out of the way. This is a very important addition to the game which takes it beyond Virtua Fighter 2 and Fighting Vipers. Every character has moves or combinations that once activated take quite a while to execute. Now you can either block the move (fair enough) or better still use the dodge. Typically you're free to counterstrike whilst your foe is still committed to their move. Some techniques inflict tons more damage while your opponent is committed (Bahn's shoulder charge for one) so this is very cool - additionally go for a great-looking side-throw!





A very simple two hit combo...



... Just press KK!



SHUN DI

Although he was a fairly enjoyable fighter to use in VF2, Shun didn't really have the effectiveness to make him a real contender. Not so in Fighters MegaMix! Although he doesn't have quite the variety of combos that he has in VF3, the ones he does have in FMM are arguably more powerful thanks to the greater height on a floating attack. In fact, he has one of the most powerful combinations. Although fairly simple to execute just look at the damage it produces in Training Mode - around 150 points - and that's without using the walls for more damage.



Start with either ⇧K...



Use the somersault kick: ⇨⇨K.



The ⇩⇦⇨P move floats well.



Finish off with the cool P+K.



Start with the ⇦⇦P low punch.



Try finishing with ⇩K+G.





Another two hit kick combo...



This is ⇨KK. Very sly indeed.



While drunk try ⇨⇨P+K.



Perform a back swipe (⇦P)



Finish with a KK two-hit kick.



One of the best combos!

REVERSALS

Reversals (called counters by some) are moves that literally take an opponent's strike and use it against them. Another reason why the Virtua Fighters are typically superior to the Vipers is because the majority of them have reversals of some description whilst the Vipers have none. Performing a successful reversal usually involves prediction. You can't be reactive here - you need to start an attack and rather than finish it in the normal fashion, start the reversal move. Typically your opponent is fooled into starting a counterstrike of a certain height, which you would have predicted. Well that's the idea anyway. A good example of this is to to do the first two parts of Akira's Dragon Spear (⇦K+G ⇨P) and rather than complete it, go for a high reversal. (⇦P+K).



Akira is probably the most versatile character when it comes to reversals, like the one pictured.


Start off with a ⇦⇦K.


Use PK to spin around and hit.


And finish with a cool PPP⇩K.


A devastating combo!


Start off with ⇧P+K...


Simply finish off the combo...


... With a PPP triple swipe.


Another float move is ⇨K.


Finish off with the old PPP⇩K...


... Combo. This ends low.

LION RAFALE

One of the "pain" characters in Virtua Fighter 2, more irritating than effective. AM2 boosted his prowess considerably for VF3 where he's considered the best fighter ahead of Akira. However, despite having the same moves list in Fighters MegaMix, he just isn't so powerful. FMM's lack of staggering combinations hurts Lion a lot, as is the removal of just about every decent floating attack he has in VF3. That being the case you're pretty much left with the same kind of limited floating attacks seen in Virtua Fighter 2. Don't expect too much combo joy from Lion...


Like a lot of the other fighters...


... The KK double hit kick works.



INTRODUCING... COMBO BREAKERS

Floating combos in Fighters MegaMix are much the same as Fighting Vipers. One scooping move sends your opponent flying to the air, leaving you to do whatever nastiness springs into your mind. Luckily, there is a combo breaking method that we'll detail here.

Typically, when you're sent flying into the air, you can press P+K+G together to recover in mid-air. Usually this isn't wise as it just gives your opponent even more time to get a combo right. However, follow this technique and you should be all right.

During the air-recovery phase press up, as soon as the recovery is complete, press towards your opponent and press kick. Now, your opponent is still waiting for you to come down to continue his combo. What this should do is pre-empt your foe and give him a nice, decent, kick to the features for his insolence!

HEXEN GUIDE PART 2

It's that time of the issue again folks, as SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE unveils the second part of its awesome Hexen guide. This month, STEPHEN FULLJAMES explores the third episode of GT's massive mediaeval monster mash and discovers that his humble M&S sweatshirt is no protection against the forces of darkness! We'll be finishing off next month with the final two episodes. Don't miss it!

EPISODE 3

HERESIARCHS SEMINARY

There are two phases in this episode, solving the puzzle of the planets, and solving the puzzle of the chapels. In the main hall of Heresiarch's Seminary, there is an astrological chart with a symbol for the sun in the centre. You can also see a red gem on the lower left corner, representing one of the planets. Five spots for the other planets are scattered across the chart, except that the gems representing those planets are missing. Your goal is to find these missing planets and fit them on the chart. The second puzzle involves a whopping nine sub-puzzles. Some puzzles are switches that to pull, and others are places to cross. After you find and solve all nine puzzles, Mr Heresiarch himself turns up to give you some grief.



PUZZLE OF THE PLANETS

Take the lift down at the start of the level and enter the Herisiarch' s Seminary. The lights are turned out as you enter, but walk a short way in and a small earthquake is triggered, then the lights in the hall will turn on. The astrological chart is on the other side of the wall facing the entrance to the Seminary.

The five planet gems that you need are found on two sub-levels, the Orchard of Lamentations (two planets) and the Silent Refectory (three planets). There are stained glass walls in the northeastern and northwestern corners of the Seminary. Smash these glass walls and pull the six switches behind them. This opens corridors in the northeast and southeast corners of the Seminary.





On the left we have a decomposing corpse, hanging from the ceiling. We've got one of those in our office, you know.

SILENT REFECTORY

Go down the north east corridor in the Seminary. At the end of the corridor, there's a room with a switch on the left wall - pull it and run to the lift which is descending on your right. If you don't hurry, the lift will be too far down and you'll get hurt jumping down to it. The portal leading to the Silent Refectory is at the bottom of the shaft. The switch on the wall down there lowers the lift so that you can get out again.



This is the Star Chart which needs to be completed to solve one half of the Seminary puzzle. Find five planets to go in the holes.

FIRST EMERALD PLANET

From where you start in the Refectory, turn right between the boxes. Jump up onto the box in front of you, and turn left. When you drop down a little further on, turn to the right. You'll reach a stack of boxes, follow them to the right, and when you reach the wall, turn left and look into the dark area. Pull the switch inside, then go around the boxes hiding the switch, and stairs should have lowered. The portal at the bottom of the stairs takes you back to the Heresiarch's Seminary. Don't enter the portal just yet, instead go to the room behind the portal where the Dark Bishops are. There's a switch on the raised walkway at the far end of the room. Pull this switch and a small area behind the portal opens. One of the Emerald Planets is on the shelf inside this area.



FIRST SAPPHIRE PLANET

Go to where the exit portal is and climb up the stairs. Now turn right and keep going until boxes block your way. Turn right, and you should see a stack of two boxes marked with a symbol. Jump on the boxes on your right, and go inside the dark area. The switch in this area lowers the pile of boxes marked with the symbol. Pull the switch and quickly climb out of the dark area. Jump into the hole where the marked boxes



Okay, so we're cheating here. You shouldn't have the fourth weapon yet, but we if did things properly we'd be here all night.

have lowered (if you prefer to shoot at the slaughtaurs from above, you can always go pull the switch again when the boxes rise up). Climb up the spiral staircase, brace yourself, and pull the switch at the top. If you survive the surprise event, go back to where the marked boxes are and activate them. The boxes will lower. Step on to them and you'll be taken back up to the area full of boxes. Turn right off the marked boxes, then take the first passage on the left, then the first right and keep going until you see another box marked with a symbol. Jump onto this box and walk into the small area at the back, and pull the switch there. Now a door is open on the wall next to the last marked box. Go into the room behind this door, which has windows looking into some kind of dining room. Enter the dining room and go to the far end. There should be an opening here which leads to an ascend-





On the left, we have the first Emerald Planet (small, ain't it?).

ing passage which has windows looking into the room with the spiral stairs. At the end of the passage there's a switch that opens a door in the dining room. Pull the switch, then go back to the dining room and enter the opening on the right wall. There's a large pillar rising



from the pit in the middle of the room. When you approach the edge of the pit, the pillar will begin to open and lower to the ground, revealing the Sapphire Planet on a smaller pillar inside. To get the planet, aim carefully and jump onto the pillar. Don't worry if you miss, because the pillar will start to lower if you fall in the pit or when you jump on it. Wait for a while and it will rise again. Jump back out and return to the dining room.

RUBY PLANET

Enter the door on the west side of the dining room. There are two doors here - you can pick either one. The one on the left goes into a room with a lava pool and the one on the right into a room with a water pool. Each of these rooms has a revolving door, which you have to push to open. This leads into a chamber with the Ruby Planet on a shelf. Now it's time to get on over to the Orchard of Lamentations. If you go to the room with the lava pool, you'll notice that one of the dark openings is shorter than the rest. This is a hidden passage that leads right back to where you first




entered the Refectory. Go through here and make your way to the portal, and return to Heresiarch's Seminary.

ORCHARD OF LAMENTATIONS

Go down the southeast corridor in the Seminary. Look for a switch on your right before you reach the end. Pull this switch and turn aback the way you came. After a short pause, the stairs you just came down will lower, revealing a secret passage on the south wall beside the stairs. Go inside this passage, and climb up the stairs. Kill the Dark Bishops here and the southern wall of the room opens, leading to the area outside the Seminary. Now a similar room will open on the other side of the Seminary. Go west (outside the Seminary) and enter the room there. Go down the stairs, and follow the zig-zagging passage. A hidden teleport in the passage warps you to a ledge on the east side of the Seminary. There is a switch on the ledge - pull it and a door will open on the wall in the






area below the ledge. The portal behind this wall takes you to the Orchard of Lamentations.

SECOND EMERALD PLANET

In the Orchard, follow the path from the portal. Be careful of the muck here and you'll reach an area with slaughtaurs on two high ledges. Go further on, and go down to the round area with ettins, slaughtaurs and



Whilst it doesn't make for a very exciting picture, this hole in the ground leads to the Orchard, so it's quite important.

poison mushrooms. Go down the stairs on the south side of this area. Now you have to be very fast in making your moves. Pull the switch, which lowers the platform at the end of the path. Quickly jump down and run as fast as possible to the nearest corner, before the entire floor rises and crushes you to death. Now you'll be in a small room with a switch that lowers the floor again. Your goal is to reach the middle southern room in this place (look at the map). You do this by pulling the switch in each of the rooms and going quickly from room to room as the floor lowers and rises. When you reach the middle southern room, there should be two switches. The switch on the east wall opens the central room in this crushing-floor area (look at the map and you'll know what I mean). Once this is opened, you can reach it from any of the seven rooms. There are also two switches in this room - one of them activates something on this level and the other lowers the floor so that you can get out. Once you've pulled the switch, lower the floor and run to the north side where the exit is. Go back to the area with the slaughtaurs on the two ledges. The high place on the east has now lowered - climb all the way up until you reach the slimy river at the very top. The Emerald Planet you're looking for is near the edge of the slime-falls (don't fall though, it hurts).

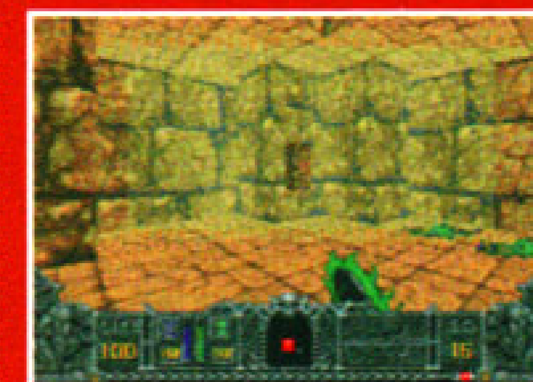
SECOND SAPPHIRE PLANET

Go to the raised ledge in front of the slimy river. You should be able to see one of the ledges with the



Another exciting shot, this time of yer actual Orchard of Lamentations portal. Orchard of Lamentations, what a name eh?







This little blue dot is a Sapphire Planet. It makes for another dull screenshot, I'm afraid, but it's also important. No, really.

slaughtaurs. Aim carefully, run as fast as you can and jump onto that ledge. If you can't make it, keep trying! Once on the ledge, enter the misty passage behind it. This is a magical passage similar to the one in the Heresiarch's Seminary - it teleports you somewhere along the way to a similar passage that leads into the west side of the area with the four paths. You should notice that the east side of this area is now open. Go down the stairs into the misty passage. This is another of those magical passages. It teleports you to the other ledge with the slaughtaurs. The Sapphire Planet is here. Grab it and jump down off the ledge. Now return to Heresiarch's Seminary.

THE LAST SEGMENT OF YOUR FOURTH WEAPON

By this point, you should have found the first two parts of your fourth weapon. Go to the end of the southeast passage in the Heresiarch's Seminary. There's a switch here that you must pull - see if you can find it. It's not the one on the ledge that opens the portal to the Orchard of Lamentations. This switch will start rotating the four doors along the passage. Two of

these doors lead to the ledges with the Chaos Serpents overlooking this area. The door we're interested in is the southwestern one, which leads to a room with many pitchers. The last segment of your fourth weapon can be found in this room. The pitchers in here have lots of ammo in them. But watch out, as one of them contains a nasty surprise! We'll leave you to find out what it is...

FITTING THE PLANETS ON THE CHART

Go to the chart, select a planet, and use it on the chart. You should be able to figure out which planet belongs where on the chart - as the game won't let you put a planet in the wrong place, so just try another spot if it says "you can't use this here". Before you go on, check that you've fitted all five planets on the chart. Once you've fitted in all the planets, go to the north part of the Seminary where the magical area is. Doors will open on the side walls and on the wall behind the area. The door behind the magical area leads to a room with three portals and nine panels on the wall.

PUZZLE OF THE CHAPELS

Just as in Shadow Wood in the second episode, each of these panels corresponds to one of the nine puzzles you must solve in the chapels. Each of the three portals by the panels lead to a different chapel. The portal with the wolf symbol leads to the Wolf Chapel, the portal with the dragon head symbol leads to the



Dragon Chapel, and the portal with the griffin symbol leads, obviously, to the Griffin Chapel. Each chapel contains three portals, each leading to the other two chapels and the Seminary. These portals also have the corresponding symbols on them to indicate where they go to. The portal leading back to the Seminary has no symbol on it. The three chapels are quite intricately connected with each other - so pulling a puzzle switch in one chapel will open several new doors and areas in other chapels.



GRIFFIN CHAPEL 1

In the Griffin Chapel there are two cages full of those pesky Chaos Serpents on the northwest and northeast corners of the hall, as well as another cage with another Chaos Serpent on the south side. On the south side, there also are two staircases leading downwards which have really high steps. These are currently blocked with bars which will open when you solve the first puzzle in the Wolf Chapel. There are also bars on the north side which lead to a deep chasm. They can be opened by solving the first puzzle in the Dragon Chapel. Go to the west side of the hall where there's a wall with a purple diamond at the top. This is a secret door - open it and pull the switch



inside. This is the first puzzle switch in the Griffin Chapel. Besides solving a ninth of the puzzle, it also opens: two pillars next to the two Serpent cages in the hall - the switches inside these pillars open the cages, the door on the north side of the hallway in the Wolf Chapel, which leads to the second puzzle in the Wolf Chapel, the northern pair of rotating pillars on the west side of the Dragon Chapel, which leads you to the second puzzle switch in that chapel, and also



In this room is a switch allowing access to the Wolf Chapel.

opens the bars blocking the northern passage on the east side of that chapel. Got all that? Good. Now make your way to the Wolf Chapel.

WOLF CHAPEL 1

You arrive in a small room containing the three other portals, which is outside the main chapel building. Go round the left side of the chapel, and you'll find a small staircase leading to a door at the back of the building. Go inside and pull the switch. This opens the door on the south side of the building, which leads to a long hallway. Turn right when you enter this place and open another door there. The switch inside is the first puzzle switch in this chapel. Besides solving one of the nine puzzles, this switch will: open the bars blocking the staircase with high steps in the Griffin Chapel, open the southern pair of rotating pillars on the west side of the Dragon Chapel, as well as the bars blocking the south passage on the east side of that chapel.

DRAGON CHAPEL 1

When you first enter the Dragon Chapel, beware of the crystal vials on the ledges at the sides of the room. If you decide to grab them, be ready for a nasty encounter. There's a circle of unlit lamps in the front of the hall. If you've solved the first puzzles in the other two chapels, the lamps will be lit and a Krater of Might will teleport into this circle after a while. Go up the steps leading to the swamp pool, and grab the goodies behind the pool. Kill the Dark Bishops that appear. Now two doors will have opened on the east and west sides of the hall. Be careful when you enter one of these doors, because monsters behind the other door will be sneaking up behind you. The east door leads to a short corridor with two passages on the north and south sides. The west door leads to a short corridor with two pairs of rotating pillars on the north and south sides that block the passages beyond. You cannot pass these pillars unless you've solved the first puzzles on the other two chapels. There's a switch on the left wall. This is the first puzzle switch in this chapel. This switch also opens: a door on the east and a door on the west side of the hallway in the Wolf Chapel and the bars on the north side of the hall in the Griffin Chapel, which leads to a huge pit with lava at the bottom

GRIFFIN CHAPEL 2

Go to the Griffin Chapel, and down the stairs on the south side of the hall. Climb up the passage on your right. This leads to an open area with a deep chasm



This swamp drains out, allowing access to loads of power-ups.



on either side of a walkway. Go to the end of the walkway where it widens out into a round ledge. When you walk over here, a trigger is activated. This is the second puzzle switch in this chapel.

GRIFFIN CHAPEL 3

Go to the huge pit with lava at the bottom. There's a small black arrow on the floor pointing at the pit. Walk over the edge in that direction and a magic blue bridge appears at your feet, leading to two openings across the deep chasm. Now go to the opening on the right first and press the switch there. This will open the bars that are blocking the opening on the left. After you press the switch, go to the opening on the left and enter the teleport. This takes you to the southwest corner of the chasm, near the bottom. Follow the narrow passage and jump across the small section of the chasm. The passage on the other side leads to a room with many walls in that move back and forth. If you're not careful, you'll be crushed between them! The puzzle switch is at the far end of the room. Don't run there yet; if you do, the ceiling will fall and crush you. You must

find four switches in this room first - they are located behind walls with a purple diamond at the top which can be found in the corners of the room. Activate all four switches, then go to the end of the room where the puzzle switch is. After you pull the switch, the walls move into a fixed position.

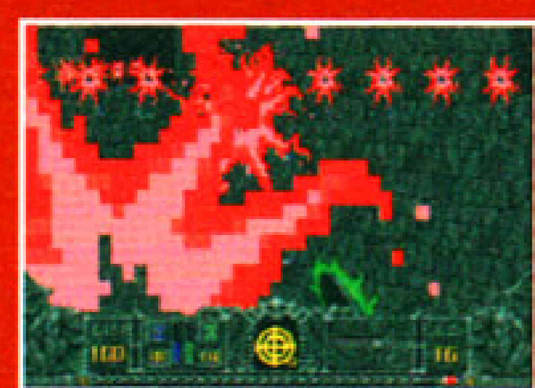


As you walk over a trigger spot on this walkway, you solve part of the puzzle. This handy message lets you know when you've stepped over the trigger. Isn't that nice?

WOLF CHAPEL 2

Go through the north door in the hallway in the Wolf Chapel. There's a long corridor behind this door. Be careful of the stained glass walls and ceilings, as they have unexpected surprises for you. At the end of the corridor is a big auditorium with a triangular symbol at the front and two pillars at the sides. You need to run and jump on both pillars, which solves the second puzzle in this chapel. This also raises the floor where the triangular symbol is marked. Now you can jump from this raised floor onto the small ledge with the Krater of Might.







(LEFT) Those red flashes indicated a magical bridge is forming.

WOLF CHAPEL 3

The switch that solves this puzzle is in one of the rooms in the dark corridors on the western part of the Wolf Chapel. Enter the Chapel using the west entrance and from there, enter the first door on the right. Now you should be in the room with two pillars and some Dark Bishops. The door on the opposite side leads to a room with the puzzle switch. Once you pull the puzzle switch, four platforms at the corners of the room will lower, with some ettins on them. The two pillars in the first room will also lower, with some Dark Bishops on them. One of the platforms will rise when you step on it and takes you to a small secret room with an Icon of the Defender.

DRAGON CHAPEL 2

Go to the west corridor where the rotating pillars are (where the first puzzle switch was). Go past the northern pair of pillars. There's a wall with a dragon symbol on it. Open this door by pulling a switch upstairs. Turn right and activate the wall where the texture is different. This lowers an elevator which takes you to the ledge with a wall with a dragon symbol on the left - open it and go up the stairs. Now you are on the high ledge in the northwest corner of the chapel. There's a switch near the edge. Pull this switch and the door downstairs opens. Now go back down the stairs and jump down into the main hall of the chapel. If you jump down from the high ledge you'll get hurt. Now go back past the northern pair of rotating pillars and go through the door that you just opened. Go all the way to the end and pull the switch there. This is the second puzzle switch in the Dragon Chapel.







DRAGON CHAPEL

Go to the east corridor and down the south passage. Activate the wall with the dragon symbols - this is an elevator that takes you to the highest ledge in the southeast corner of the chapel. From there, jump down to the lower ledge on the north. A wall opens on the right, with some baddies behind it. The switch inside is the third puzzle switch in this chapel.

THE HERESIARCH

Now return to the Heresiarch's Seminary. All nine panels on the wall should be bright. Pull out your best weapons and go into the main hall. You now face the Heresiarch before you can get out of this place. The Heresiarch has several modes of attack - he can fire a wavy trail of large purple fireballs or he can summon bouncing blobs of fire that chase you. These blobs of fire look like skulls and stay around for quite a long time before they disappear. When the Heresiarch is badly hurt, he'll also summon Dark Bishops to help him. Note that the Heresiarch can also freeze into an invulnerable mode when he has purple swirly energy around him. In this mode, all attacks are blocked and most magical weapons are actually reflected back at you. Since you should have an ample supply of quartz flasks by this time, just ignore the homing bouncing fire blobs and concentrate your attention on attacking the Heresiarch. Stay away from the purple fireballs though. These may drain too much life and exhaust all your healing potions. Don't just fire at the Heresiarch from one direction, move about and fire from different angles. This way, you've a much better chance of hitting him because shooting at him from the same angle simply causes him to freeze into invulnerable mode and your ammo is wasted. Don't touch the bouncing mana cubes when the Heresiarch dies, as they are explosive and will do more harm than good. After the Heresiarch dies, the Seminary will start to quake and tremble. Stay still in a safe place until things calm down again. Now several places on the west side of the Seminary will have opened. Go there and enter the inner sanctum of the Heresiarch. The Heresiarch himself is dead, but his followers are still around seeking revenge, so stay on your toes. Jump inside the room where the Chaos Serpent was. The wall on the corridor behind you opens up and the portal leading to the next episode will be revealed. Step through, and wait patiently for next month.



Um. It would appear that nothing of note is happening. Sorry.

SECRET LEVEL - DEATHWIND CHAPEL

You must destroy the Heresiarch before you can reach this secret chapel. After killing him, go to the northern part of the Seminary where the magical walls area is. The pillars to the south of this area are now opening and closing. Go behind the pillars and take the elevator down. The portal at the bottom takes you to the Deathwind Chapel. We'll leave you to find your own way through.



The Herisiarch is a baaaaad mutha of boss. Use the age old Doom strafe-and-fire technique for the best results.

COIN-OPERATED

Unveiled at the February AOU Amusement Expo in Japan, Sega's two player shoot 'em up is even better than Virtua Cop 2! Programmed by AM1, The House of the Dead is the finest light gun game SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has ever seen.

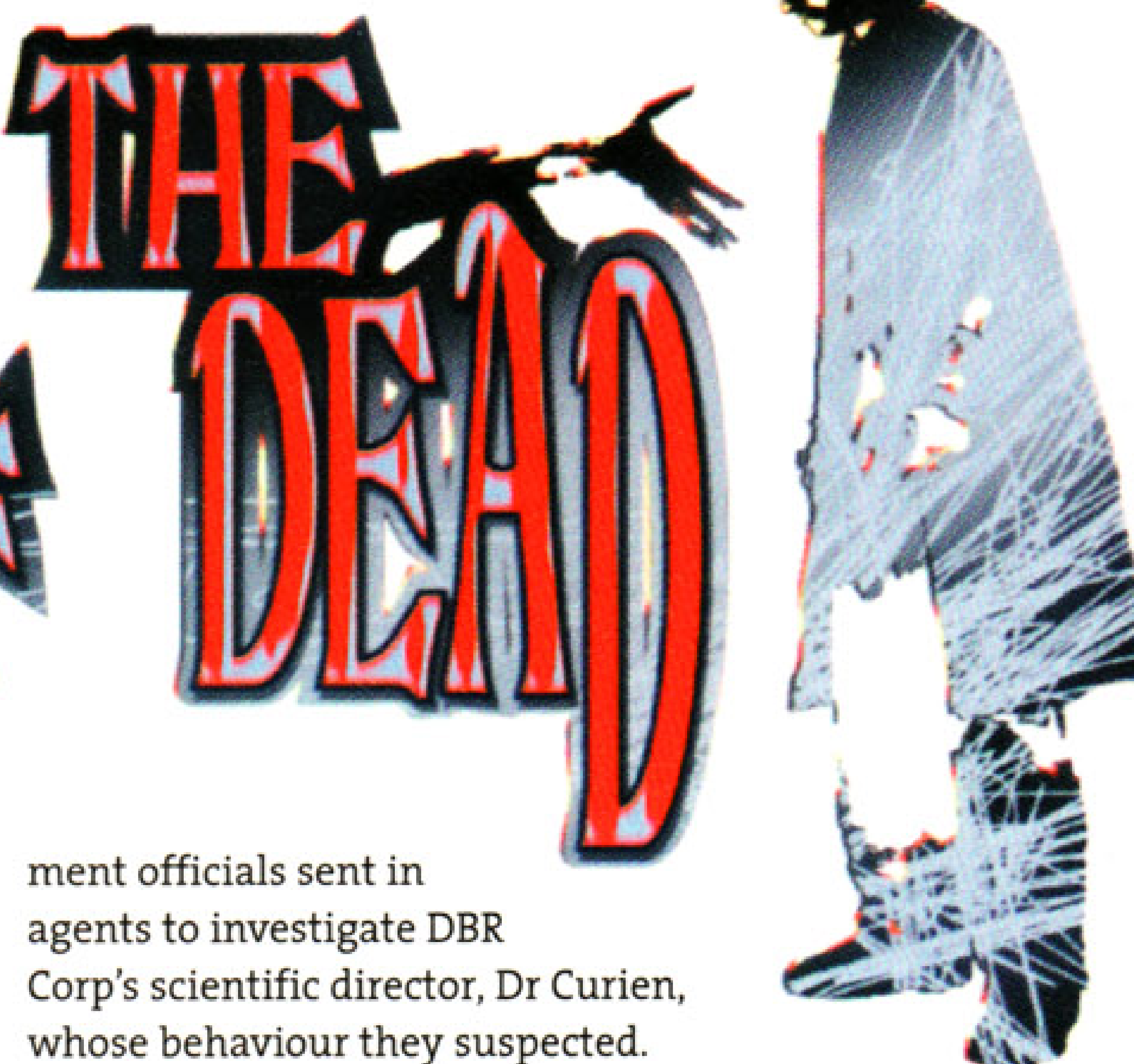
Recently making its debut in the UK, The House of the Dead has stunned and amazed those that have played it. While the game combines elements from the Virtua Cop series, and even swipes the horror motif from Capcom's Resident Evil, players have been amazed that AM1 have produced such a top title using the Model 2 board. When Sega first announced that they would be releasing a new coin-op light gun game, most players were expecting maybe a Model 3 powered Virtua Cop 3. However, neither AM2 or the expensive Model 3 board have been employed for this arcade blaster. Instead AM1 (previously known for the likes of Indy 500 and Die Hard Arcade) have been handed the development reins and successfully pushed the Model 2's potential to the limit.

The horror genre has been undergoing something of a renaissance just lately, with the likes of Wes Craven's Scream, The Relic and even Anaconda proving that cinema audiences still love being scared witless. Of course, in the world of video games, Capcom have had phenomenal success with the PlayStation version of Resident Evil and Saturn owners can expect to play an "enhanced" version of the game later this year. Capitalising on this current horror resurgence, Sega have produced an arcade shoot 'em up that's guaranteed to send shivers up your spine!

In keeping with the low budget feel of such classic fright films as Night of the Living Dead, Evil Dead 2 and the Friday the 13th series, AM1 have created an involving storyline for players to uncover. As the game begins, complete with an arty "Seven" style title sequence, the chilling plot is revealed...



THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD





DEAD BY DAWN

There have been a number of cases where scientists at DBR Corp, a genetics research centre, have suddenly disappeared. The situation looked serious, so high ranking government officials sent in agents to investigate DBR Corp's scientific director, Dr Curien, whose behaviour they suspected. However, the agents never returned. Their last message was only that Dr Curien was in the final stage of some secret plan and that his research was highly dangerous.

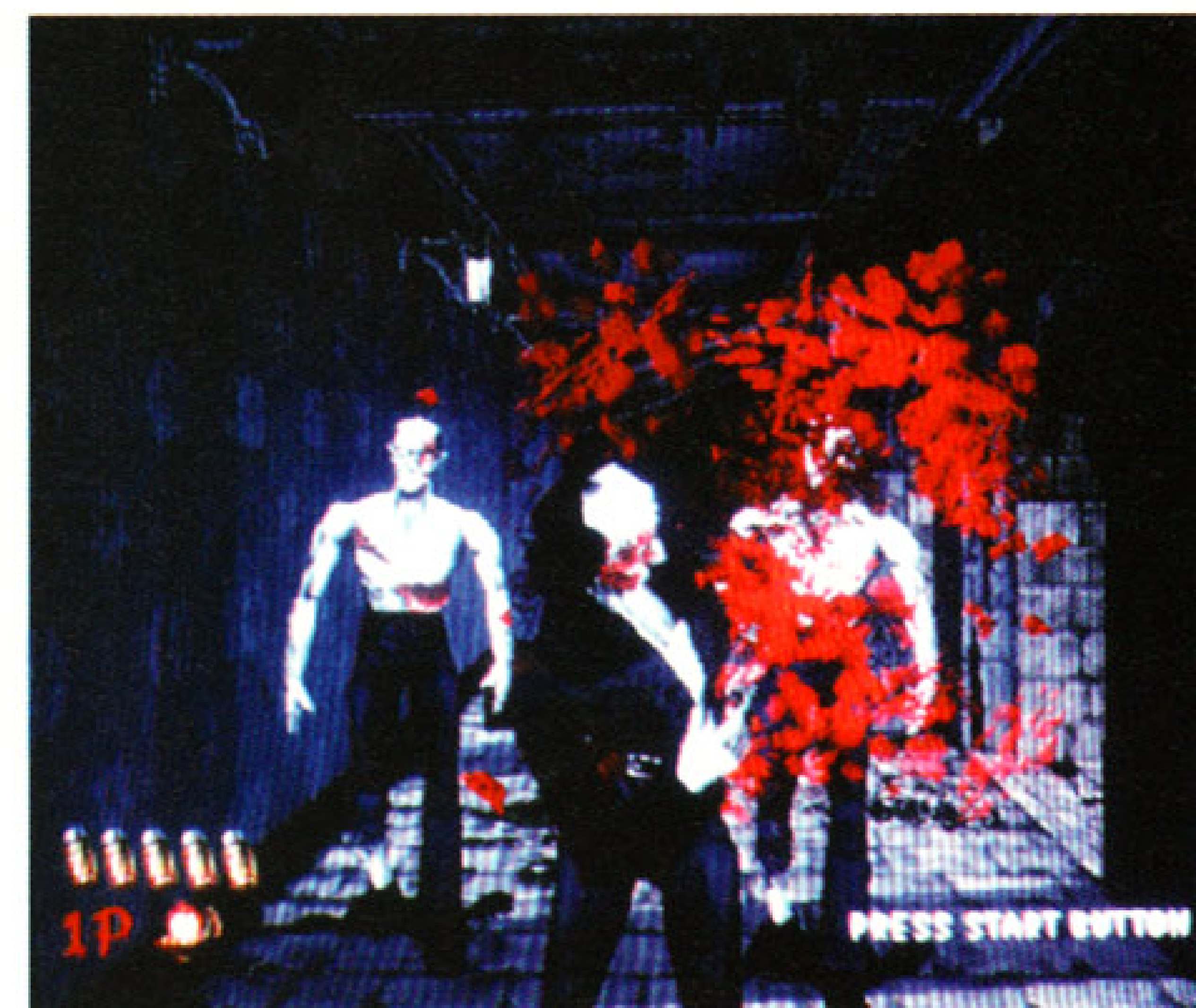
The date is now December 20th 1998 and the setting is a large gothic mansion (DBR Corp's scientific centre). As a last resort, the government have decided to send in two of their top agents, "Tom Rogan" and the mysterious "G". Tom is engaged to marry Sophie Richards, a scientist working at DBR Corp and has already met Dr. Curien on past occasions.

What is the cause of the most gruesome case this century? What are the evil schemes of Dr Curien? Only you can discover the whereabouts of the missing scientists, find your missing fiancee, Sophie, and





Above: Stage 3 boss, Chariot, attacks players with a lethal battle axe. Shoot its unprotected chest plate for a swift victory. Right: Forget Capcom's Resident Evil, AM1 have cranked up the gore in The House of the Dead to unprecedented levels!



Monsters, mystery, maidens and mayhem. The House of the Dead has 'em all! Players take on the roles of government agents, Tom Rogan and G, sent to investigate strange happenings at a gothic mansion. A zombie blastfest awaits...





destroy the horrific evil that threatens the world, once and for all!

Entering the main courtyard, players are instantly attacked by a group of wandering zombies and also encounter the first scientists as well as the beautiful Sophie. As in Virtua Cop, saving the innocents plays a key element in the game as rescued scientists reward sharp shooting players with such extras as additional firepower, level maps and security cards. Complete a level and you're rewarded with a 'Life Bonus' depending on how many innocents have been saved. Upon gaining the maps, players soon discover The House of the Dead's most innovative feature... multiple routes!



Whoops! Failure to rescue scientists severely reduces a player's Life Bonus score. However, save the wandering lab coats and you're rewarded with level maps, health boosts and extra weapons such as the shotgun.

THE ROAD TO HELL

In previous shoot 'em ups players have had no choice in plotting a path through a game's many levels. The House of the Dead changes all that by allowing Rowgun and G to select their own routes through the zombie infested mansion. When a scientist or innocent civilian is rescued, a level map is sometimes collected, with hidden or alternative routes marked out. As players reach certain points in the game, they're free to choose which path they'll take. However, these extra routes are only accessed if you know the correct manner in which to select them. For instance, in Stage 3: Truth, the agents carefully make their way through a deserted chemical factory until they reach an elevator. If players fail to shoot the right-hand switch to open the lift doors,



Eat pistol, pal! Chainsaw slashing zombies are just one of the devious creatures lurking within the mansion's many rooms. Shoot monsters and objects to find hidden routes.

THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD

Presented by AM1

Don't go in the house ...ALONE!



they'll avoid using the alternative secret passageway. These additional routes are well worth discovering as they're usually packed with handy power-ups, extra lives and monsters galore and also have the added bonus of extending the game's longevity - something that few coin-ops manage to accomplish. So even if players do manage to complete The House of the Dead, a feat that will still require superb marksmanship and plenty of continues, the game never plays the same way twice.

MASTER OF MONSTERS

Although there's no denying that AM2's classic Virtua Cop games are easily the best arcade shoot 'em ups available, both titles do suffer from being somewhat squeaky clean. Shoot a criminal in the head, leg or any other part of his anatomy and they'll simply flicker, disappear and players are rewarded with a cozy little score. The House of the Dead, on the other hand, doesn't pull any punches in the violence department. In fact AM1 have created one of the bloodiest coin-ops we've ever played! For a start, each ghastly creature in the game has its own trademark attack that inflicts varying degrees of damage on players who are slow to respond to undead attacks. Fail to shoot a zombie in time and they claw the screen, leaving slimy green finger marks and sapping precious energy. Likewise, chainsaw wielding monsters hack away at unsuspecting agents, bats swoop in to bite and explosions shake the entire screen. What's especially impressive is the fact that the forces of darkness are constantly on the move as zombies inhabit every room, unexpectedly bursting out of cabinets, experimental glass tanks and from behind seemingly locked doors at the most unlikely moments. Of course, players are hardly defenceless and a few quick shots are usually more than enough to blow away any lumbering monstrosity.

Blasting away at zombies results in gallons of green goo gushing from open wounds and disintegrated flesh flying off in huge chunks. However, progression through the mansion results in agents not only blasting minor creatures to pieces, they also encounter some of the most incredibly detailed and well-animated bosses to ever grace an arcade cabinet!





BEHOLD... MY CREATION LIVES!

If you've managed to complete The House of the Dead, then you'll know that all of the game's monster guardians are superb. While even the earlier stages boast such frightening end-of-level bosses as the battle axe-wielding armoured zombie known as Chariot and a giant spider, the final stages are simple incredible. It's these encounters that highlight just how far AM1 are pushing the Model 2 technology. For instance, take the mutated spider boss of Stage 3, Hermit. Players first encounter this nightmare arachnid at the start of the third level as they begin their pursuit of the elusive Dr Curian. The battle is short and sweet with the spider's head being its obvious weak point. However, make it through to the end of the stage in one piece and Rowgun and G face the six-legged fiend once again. This time though, Hermit proves to be a far more formidable foe and attacks players when they enter a pipe-like passageway. Aiming for the head takes off some energy but Hermit now dodges player's fire and fights back using multiple leg attacks and begins

spewing out a lethal silken thread. Fast reloading and accuracy are required if would-be agents wish to reach the game's next stage.

SHOCK, SHOCK, HORROR, HORROR

Although The House of the Dead has only appeared in limited UK arcades in the past few months, players are already curious to know whether AM1 have any plans to convert this gruesome shoot 'em up to the Saturn. As usual, Sega are staying tight-lipped regarding any possible arcade-to-console conversions but considering that Virtua Cop 2, Virtua Fighter 2 and Virtual On were all Model 2 games, it's possible that we may see a home version of this game sometime next year. The only real stumbling block would be how the Saturn would cope with The House of the Dead's incredibly detailed texture maps and multiple on-screen polygon enemies. Always in search of the truth, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE will be continuing its indepth coverage of The House of the Dead next month as we present an exclusive interview with the game's creators, AM1! Look out for that amazingly informative piece next issue and make sure you check out The House of the Dead at an arcade near you now.





Below: The game's final mysterious boss. Who is he and what is his connection to Dr Curian? Find out next issue...



GRUESOME GAME GUIDE

STAGE 1: TRAGEDY

Players begin their mission by dashing across the seemingly deserted courtyard area. Zombies soon make their presence felt and attack a number of fleeing scientists who need to be rescued. In particular, a huge zombie is seen carrying a scientist to the edge of a bridge, where he will be hurled to his doom. Players are required to shoot the creature a number of times before the scientist reaches safety. Mutant dogs and fish also make their first appearance in the game and move with frightening speed. Upon entering the mansion, more zombies attack and a number of secret routes are to be discovered before players face the armoured might of Chariot.

BOSS: CHARIOT

Well protected and armed, Chariot attacks ferociously with its mighty battle axe. This fiend's weak spot is located in its chest and highlighted by a blood red patch. While one player aims at this target, the other should keep Chariot at bay by laying down covering fire.

STAGE 2: REVENGE

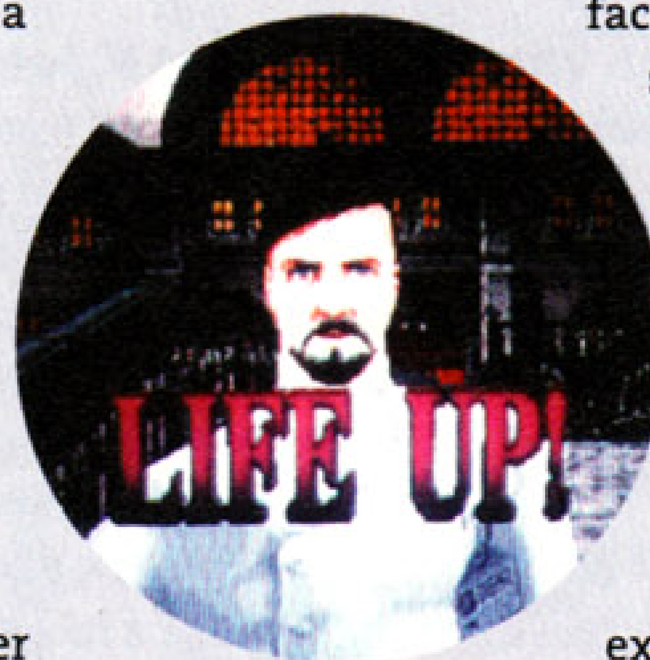
The beautiful Sophie makes her delightful presence felt once again and tantalises players with vital clues and information. The exploration of the mansion continues with players making their way through such diverse locations as the Art Room, Bedrooms, Kitchen and Research Centre. Creatures encountered in this stage include bloodthirsty bats, monkey zombies and knife-wielding, suit-wearing undead office workers! Rowgun and G also explore the abandoned chemical factory where they are attacked by a number of bizarre creations before making a mad dash across the mansion's roof.

BOSS: HANGEDMAN

By combining human and bat DNA, Dr Curian's scientists have created the Hangedman. Surrounded by a dark cloud of hovering bats, this flying monstrosity swoops down towards players and rakes the screen with its claws before taking to the sky again. It's attacks are followed by multiple bat assaults. To defeat this beast, aim for the centre of its torso and, in particular, concentrate fire when it approaches the screen.

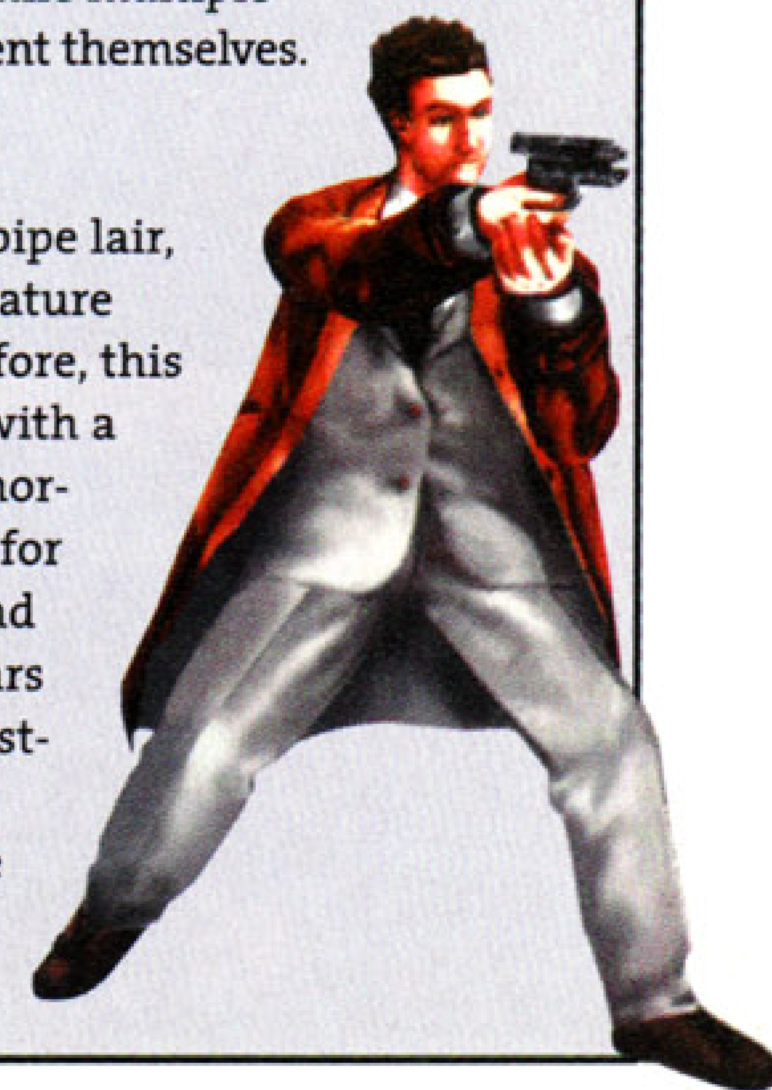
STAGE 3: TRUTH

Dr Curian finally reveals himself before beating a hasty retreat. Entering a laboratory, players face Hermit for the first time as well as some next generation zombies. These undead creatures are partly encased in metal and offer some hint as to what the mad Doc is really up to. Also appearing are evil zombies with stretchable, hooked claws. A secret elevator is to be discovered nearby. Saving a female scientist gains players an extra life while multiple routes also present themselves.



BOSS: HERMIT

Scurrying away to its pipe lair, Hermit is a vicious creature indeed. As detailed before, this arachnid boss moves with a speed that belies its enormous bulk. Watch out for multiple leg attacks and web thread that appears from its rear. After blasting its head, players soon slow the creature down and then move in for the kill!



OUT NOW

PANDEMONIUM
BY SEGA £44.99 90%

As the video gaming public are more than aware, the PlayStation's lack of decent platform titles has long been a source of embarrassment for Sony and their recent attempts to hype Crash Bandicoot as a company mascot were merely laughable. However, all that has changed recently as US based developer Crystal Dynamics have managed to triumph were others had failed by developing Pandemonium, a colourful 2.5D platformer that has elevated this neglected genre from its 16-bit glory days.



Now, thanks to a bit of quick thinking, Sega have snapped up Pandemonium from previous UK distributor BMG and unleashed this Technicolour title on the Saturn. We say Pandemonium is a "2.5D" platformer due to the game's linear structure. Players run from left to right across bizarre fantasy worlds and actual 3D sections are few and far between. But even taking into account its basic structure, Pandemonium still manages to conjure up warm and cuddly feelings of platform games from yesteryear. There's certainly nothing original about bouncing on enemies, collecting power-ups and facing huge end-of-level bosses but this game manages to incorporate all of these features and covers them with a sugary coating to warm the hearts of those jaded Saturn owners bored with endless beat-'em-ups and Doom style corridor titles. PlayStation owners receive yet another kick in the teeth, as Pandemonium is also the first Saturn game to feature transparencies, an amazing programming feat previously thought to be impossible. If Sega have been hanging their heads in shame because of the likes of Bug Too! and Sonic 3D Blast then Pandemonium more than satisfies with a combination of tongue-in-cheek humour, sneaky level designs and a supremely satisfying challenge. Pandemonium may not have the longevity of other Saturn titles but completing the game is only half the fun. Locating all the secret sections and wacky bonus games adds yet another level of gameplay to this top platforming romp.



FIGHTERS MEGAMIX
BY SEGA £TBA 95%



The best Sega fighting game EVER, finally makes its mark on the Saturn. UK gamers have been tearing their hair out in anticipation for AM2's latest 3D beat 'em up and, as SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE assured you, the finished results have been well worth the wait.

The thought of a title that combined both Virtua Fighter 2 and Fighting Vipers characters on one disc was dismissed as mere rumour six months ago but Fighters MegaMix is definitely no myth. It's simply the Saturn game you have to buy! Although the game neglects to use VF2's high resolution mode, and instead opts for the slightly rougher feel of Fighting Vipers, the smooth animation and perfect timing of both the original titles has been retained. While hardcore gamers may feel more at home with VF2's pixel perfect moves, MegaMix has a looser feel which many players will appreciate. Also on the plus side are the welcome additions of Viper's style walls, armour breaker moves, new play modes and a host of hidden characters including Virtua Cop's Janet Marshall and even the Daytona Hornet! UK Saturn owners may be worried that the PAL conversion will suffer but rest assured that Sega have taken the time to reduce the game's potentially obtrusive borders and even the loss of speed is minimal. If Virtua Fighter 3 on Saturn never happens, we could be looking at the game of the year. So what are you waiting for? Go buy it!





MR BONES
BY SEGA £29.99 66%

Well, it's certainly different. In development for what seems like an eternity, Mr Bones finally rattles his boney ass over to these shores only to be greeted with a slightly better than average score. We usually only give this kind of scorn to obscure Japanese import titles but if ever a PAL game deserved harsh criticism, it's this musical malarky. Developed by those crazy Yanks Segasoft, Mr Bones attempts to blend numerous gameplay styles with some appalling American humour and the results are a shambling mess to say the least.

Now we at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE have no problem with software companies attempting to develop new gaming ideas. After all, originality is the key to successful video games but after playing Mr Bones for five minutes, you soon get the feeling that you're looking at some kind of aborted Mega CD title. Using a combination of rendered sprites and FMV backgrounds, this anatomical abomination offers players the opportunity to guide old calcium cranium through a number of diverse stages in an attempt to win his body back from beyond the grave. Using rock music as a key element, Mr Bones tackles such yawnsome tasks as entertaining the undead with naff jokes, performing dreadful Eric Clapton style guitar riffs and playing bongos in Hell. A lack of depth, very little gameplay and some of the worst comedy this side of Hi-De-Hi. Best avoided.



MECHWARRIOR 2
BY ACTIVISION £44.99 89%

Although receiving a not-too-shabby SSM rating of 89% last month, Activision's MechWarrior 2 could have easily surpassed this score with the addition of a multi-player mode. Certainly a split-screen option or even a Link Cable feature would have been heartily welcomed but alas this futuristic strategy shoot-'em-up remains purely a one player affair. Of course that's not say that MechWarrior 2 is uninspiring at all. On the contrary, Activision must be commended for producing an enthralling Saturn title that manages to perfectly capture the intensity of the PC original yet adds enough extras to keep 32-bit console owners more than happy. You know you're such a picky bunch...

Players take command of a number of walking assault platforms (or Mechs), each of which is armed to the teeth with state-of-the-art weapons, and tackle up to 32 varied missions ranging from search-and-destroy campaigns to all-out attacks on enemy strongholds. This action takes place from inside the cockpit of each Mech and as a first person perspective blaster, MechWarrior 2 excels. Smooth visuals and superb sound effects all combine to give MechWarrior 2 a surprisingly realistic atmosphere, one that proves accessible to both skilled warriors and novice players alike. Initial missions give pilots the opportunity to get to grip with the Mech's basic controls and weapons while later campaigns are tougher, requiring a player's total concentration. Be warned though! If you're expecting just a basic shoot-'em-up, you're going to be sadly disappointed, MechWarrior 2 requires players to use their brains and their trigger fingers in





order to meet the challenge of the Clan wars. Still, if this were an easier game to wade through, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE would have been forced to knock MechWarrior 2's score down considerably. As it stands, Activision have produced a testing, engaging and worthy addition to any Saturn owner's library.

SCORCHER

BY SEGA £TBA 70%

When Scavenger first announced their intention to develop Saturn games, initial promises and early footage hinted at some superb titles to come. Two years later and both AMOK and Scorcher have failed to live up to their own hype.

Set in yet another post-apocalyptic wasteland (the future doesn't look that rosy does it?), players race against each over a series of spiralling courses bumping and bouncing around the tracks in self-contained energy spheres. Obstacles such as pot holes, barriers and sheers drops are present to test a pilot's skill but the addition of other pilots also makes for some nail-biting races. Unfortunately, Scorcher is purely a one player game with CPU controlled opponents providing the bulk of the challenge and tricky tracks added as an additional nuisance. The game's main failing is that the control of the sphere's is very poor. Miss the desired piece of track or accidentally nudge another racer and players ricochet around the course before regaining their lost time and positions. While Sega Rally offers a true racing challenge and Wipeout has its trademark breakneck speed, Scorcher basically misses the boat by offering a confusing mishmash of racing features that haven't been done better and faster somewhere else. Let's hope future Scavenger titles are of a higher quality.



SHINING THE HOLY ARK

BY SEGA £44.99 93%

If there's one style of video game that both American and European audiences are crying out for it's RPG's. Fortunately, Sega Europe have just released the awesome epic that is Shining the Holy Ark! Continuing the classic Shining series, Team Sonic's latest RPG offers Saturn owners something other than a standard overhead fantasy adventure. For a start the entire game is played from a first person perspective which certainly adds a refreshing change to what can be a fairly predictable genre. Shining the Holy Ark features an engaging storyline, some spectacular battles, devilishly clever puzzles and an array of dazzling spells to master. If you've never been tempted by turn-based combat and the lengthy explorations that form the core of any decent RPG, take a chance and purchase this title. Shining the Holy Ark offers days and weeks of thoroughly enjoyable gaming and deserves recognition as a superb Saturn title. Keep your eyes peeled for the full SSM guide!





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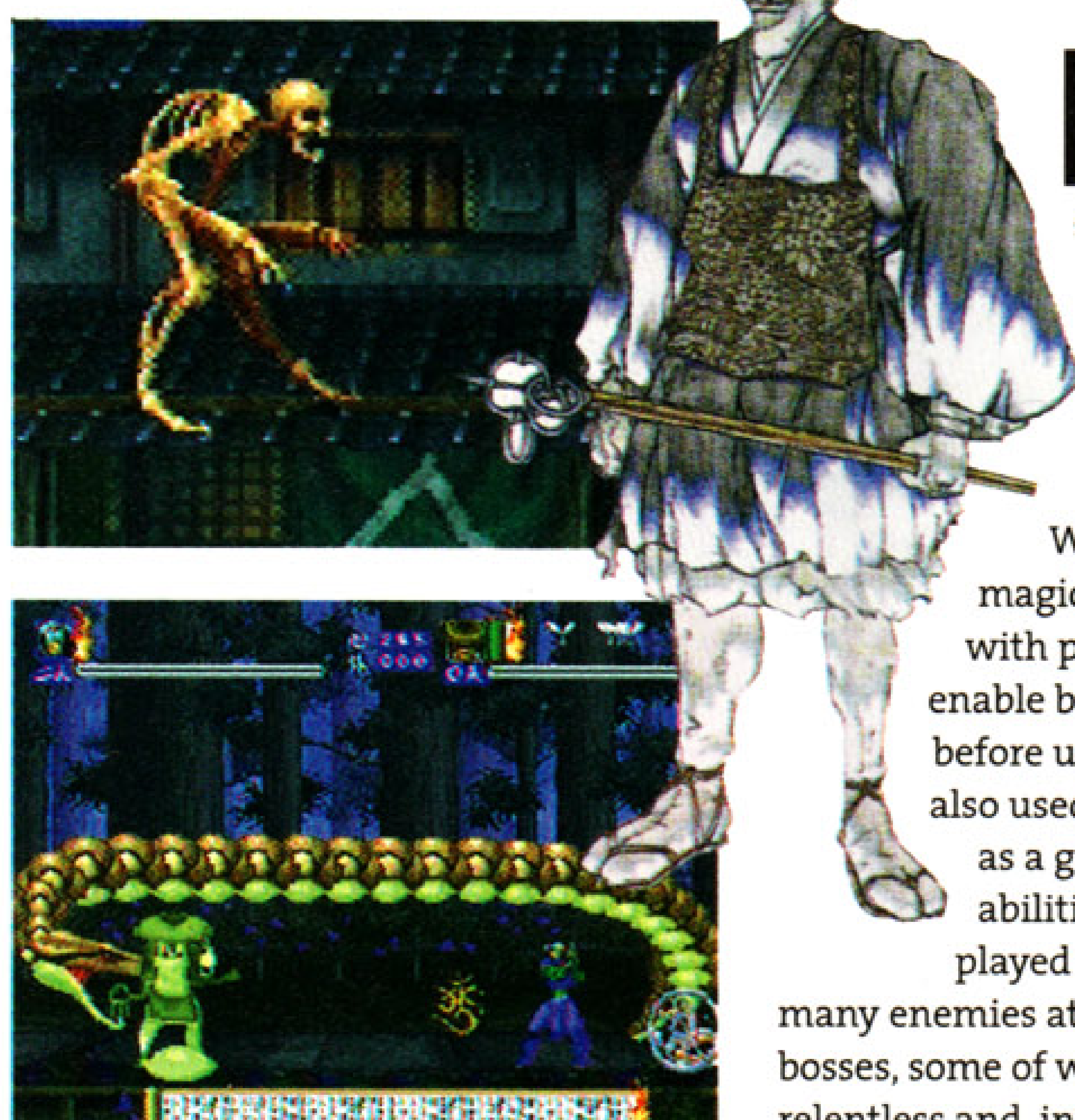
PSYCHIC WARLOCK ASSASSIN TAROMARU







Check out the monsters in these screenshots. They may only be 2D but the character animation is superb.



Two-player action and magical spells make Psychic Warrior an awesome game.

Developed by the Japanese division of Time Warner Interactive, Psychic Warlock Assassin Taromaru (a mouthful of a title if ever there was one) has recently surfaced as a scorching hot Saturn import title. Although TWI only produced 50,000 copies of the game before ceasing trading, the company obviously pulled out all the stops to deliver a stunning 2D action title.

Following in the hallowed footsteps of such classic video games as Konami's Castlevania and Ikari Warriors, Psychic Warlock is an incredibly detailed platformer set in feudal Japan. As magical ninja warriors, players set out on a challenging quest armed with powerful lock-on spells and mystical abilities. These powers enable both characters, Taromaru and Enkai, to charge up their spells before unleashing devastating multiple attacks. This mystical energy is also used to conjure a protective forcefield which deflects attacks and acts as a gravity brake when falling from long drops. Mastering all of these abilities is the key to surviving one of the toughest platformers we've played for ages. Forget Pandemonium, Psychic Warlock is rock-hard with many enemies attacking simultaneously, cunning levels to negotiate and massive bosses, some of which are actually larger than the screen itself! The action is relentless and, instead of the usual chapter breaks and end of level challenges, players tackle one continuing adventure that increases in size and difficulty as the game progresses.

Many Saturn owners may be put off by Psychic Warlock's simple 2D appearance but there are some 3D elements included, such as rotating levels, scaling buildings and some of the most incredible monsters we've ever seen. As the game is something of a cult hit in Japan, it's unlikely that we'll ever see Psychic Warlock Assassin Taromaru appearing on these shores, but you never know. If a UK company (such as THQ) were looking for a sure-fire Saturn hit then this pyrotechnic period piece definitely fits the bill.





When walking through this level, buildings and backgrounds smoothly rotate.

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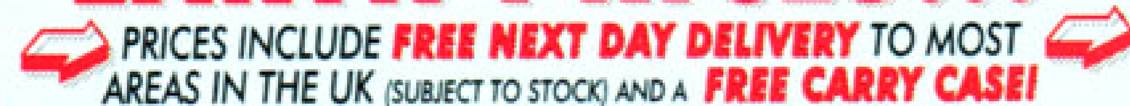
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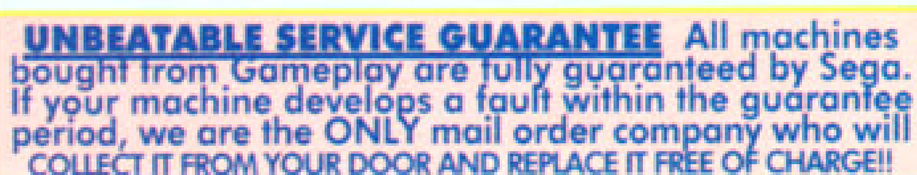
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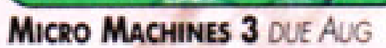
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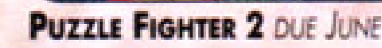

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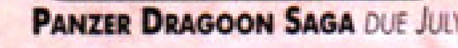

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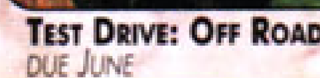

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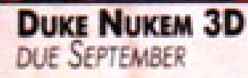

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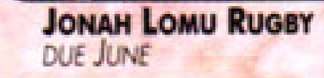

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4. FIFA '97
5. COMMAND & CONQUER
6. THEME PARK
7. WORLDWIDE SOCCER '97
8. TOMB RAIDER
9. DARK SAVIOUR
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